Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

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Editorial Comments

VINCENT LABEYRIE

CRISIS OF ENVIRONMENT OR CRISIS OF CAPITALIST ECONOMY?

BILL COWE

THE MAKING OF A CLYDESIDE COMMUNIST

Discussion

STEPHEN SEDLEY and TONY AGATHANGELOU

Social Crisis: Pornography and the Law

MARIA LOFTUS
JEAN FELDMAR

Marxism and the Family

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MARXISM TODAY

THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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Editor James Klugmann

Editorial Board Irene Brennan/Gabriel Carritt/Tony Chater/Jack Cohen/Maurice Cornforth/Maurice Dobb/John Foster/John Gollan/Arnold Kettle/John Mahon/Betty Matthews/Alan Morton/Bert Pearce/Michael Seifert/George Wake/Nick Wright

Editorial Correspondence James Klugmann, 16 King Street, WC2E 8HY

Advertisements Doris Allison, above address

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Editorial Comments

THE militant struggle is growing on economic and social issues, on issues of democracy, anti-racialism and peace. A great question arises, and shouts aloud for an answer. How is it possible to develop in the British working class and progressive movement, as the struggle develops, a *socialist* consciousness, an understanding both of the need for socialism and how in Britain it can be achieved.

As an important contribution to this most urgent task we deeply welcome the publication of Jack Woddis' recent book—*Time to Change Course*[1]—which outlines a perspective for advance, closely argued, discussing a wide range of practical and theoretical problems related to the socialist revolution in Britain. "Capitalism in Britain", he writes, "has far outlived its day. It is time to change course, to take the road to socialism."

He develops his case in three Chapters—"What's Wrong with Britain", "What a Socialist Britain Would Do", and "How to Change Course".

Jack Woddis forecasts that in the immediate future the British working class and its allies are entering a period of further major confrontations with the ruling class and its State.

The crisis of British imperialism is limiting its possibilities of manoeuvre in face of the mounting resistance of the working people. The political struggle as a result becomes more acute and confrontation grows:

> "The Tories and the capitalists, in their attempt to re-establish their imperialist world position are now obliged to launch a massive attack on the living standards and conditions of the working people. To effect this, they must strive to weaken the organised industrial and political power of the workers.
>
> "To meet this challenge, and to make further advances, the workers in their turn find it essential to conduct major struggles against the monopolies and their State, in the course of which they begin to challenge some of the prerogatives of power of the ruling class.
>
> "The workers have fought back against the capitalist offensive, finding new forms of struggle and conducting some of the most militant actions witnessed in Britain for many years. Because of the Government's anti-trade union legislation, and because of its intention to use all its power to restrict wage increases and intimidate workers taking industrial action in support of their demands, every major industrial conflict becomes a test of strength with the Government and the State, in fact with the entire ruling class.
>
> "It is this new situation which is leading to major conflicts and opening up the prospect of further defeats for the British capitalist class."

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

Extremely interesting is the treatment by Jack Woddis in his book of the relations between the fight for democracy and the fight for socialism. The question of democracy, he writes, is at the centre of the political class conflict in Britain today:

> "Democracy in the last resort poses the question of political power. Class struggle always involves the exercise of its strength by one or another, or by a grouping of classes, in order to safeguard its class interests or to challenge those of its opponents.
>
> "For the working class and its allies this means making use of and defending every democratic foothold wrested from the capitalists in order to advance the interests of the working people and diminish the power of the big monopolies who stand in the way of progress. In the course of this conflict the working people are able to come ever closer to the complete assumption of political power."

Woddis examines in detail the fire directed by the monopolies against all rights and liberties won by the British working people in centuries of struggle. And, later in the book, he shows how, in a socialist Britain, it will be possible not only to conserve all rights and liberties already won in struggle under capitalism, but immensely, qualitatively, to extend democracy for the working people in every field. The continuous extension of democracy is an essential part of the development of socialism.

This is an important study of the strategy and tactics of advance to socialism in Britain, a study not only to be read but widely distributed in every section of the labour and progressive movement.

ON WORKERS' CONTROL

New Unionism—the Case for Workers' Control[2] by those prolific writers on this

[1] Published by the CPGB, 30p.

[2] Peter Owen Ltd., £4.00.

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theme, Coates and Topham, is simultaneously absorbing and infuriating.

The question one is tempted to ask oneself when seeing yet another book by these two authors, namely, where do they find the time to produce a steady stream of articles, pamphlets and books, is answered by an even cursory turning of the pages. Much of it is a repetition of what they had already published, and not only confined to workers' control but on the general trade union and political scene.

For this reason the book lacks coherence. Because they attempt to give the solution to every problem facing the labour and trade union movement they fail to deal with any problem in depth.

Nevertheless, much of what they write on the development of the concept of workers' control amongst the active members of the Labour movement and the powerful potential force this concept has in developing the struggle for transforming society has very great merit and makes a positive contribution towards the ideological struggle for socialism.

It is a pity they did not confine themselves to this theme and concentrate on clarifying their ideas on the limits and forms of industrial democracy during the foreseeable future before full communism is developed, money abolished and the market forces—that insuperable obstacle to fully developed self-management at every level of production—wither away. For it is precisely here that confusion and ambiguity abound. The book does not help to clarify matters; indeed it would seem that the authors themselves are uncertain.

Is "Mitbestimmung"—co-determination—the German model soon to be exported to all Common Market countries by being embodied in the European Company Act to be welcomed as a step towards workers' control or resisted as a form of class collaboration?

The authors dodge this real issue. As one reads the sharp criticism of "Mitbestimmung" and nods the head in approval, the page is turned and we find them rejecting a critique of it as having contributed to the passivity of the German workers. Without a tittle of evidence they assert that this is not so, and then proceed to quote with approval a statement by the Belgian trade unions that workers' directors could either be a boon or a threat to the workers' interests, depending on who they are and what their attitude is.

Such statements do not make for clarity but make confusion more confounded. Such arguments could justify every form of trade union participation in capitalist institutions, and indeed have always been used by the Right Wing to justify membership of tripartite bodies set up by the State. The latest news that the TUC have changed their minds and are likely to opt for co-determination makes it an immediate issue which demands an unambiguous answer.

Surely the quarter century practice in Germany should reinforce the theoretical approach that *such* forms of "participation" can only lead to a blurring of class conflicts and a dampening down of the struggle to expand industrial democracy through confrontation and encroachment of managerial functions.

DEVIOUS?

Unfortunately Coates and Topham fail to give such a clear lead. But the most infuriating thing of all is the negative attitude of the authors to the Communist Party. This expresses itself not so much in an expressed attack on British communists but in a much more devious way by pretending they do not exist at all.

It is doubtful whether anyone else could have dealt with the epic Upper Clyde struggle without mentioning the Communist Jimmy Reid, and, when one reference to Jimmy Airlie is made, to ignore the fact that he too is a Communist. Thus the successful leadership to this struggle given by some of the best known Communists does not merit a mention, but the fact that a pamphlet by Barrett Brown, an active colleague of theirs in the Institute of Workers' Control, was quoted in the investigating tribunal is highlighted as if that was the main and guiding light in the Upper Clyde heroic struggle, instead of a very minor event in the course of a nation-wide prolonged mobilising campaign. Equally, in describing all the various struggles which over the recent years have transformed the movement—in which Communists were very much to the fore—there is no mention of a single Communist or quote from a Communist publication or the *Morning Star*, the Party and daily paper which played a leading role in bringing this about.

Whilst there is no shortage of quotes and references to the Institute for Workers' Control material and conferences, so far as the authors are concerned, the Communist Party has not existed since the end of the War.

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When it comes to communism in general, this bias, which mars the objectivity of the book, is even more marked. The French CGT is dismissed as a "conservative" force standing in the way of united trade union action against the International Firms without an attempt even to justify such a patently untrue statement. When it comes to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the reader is not given the opportunity of learning to what extent the workers in the plant have a say in their working conditions.

One may agree or disagree with centralised economic planning, with the extent to which the market forces should be constrained, but according to their thesis workers' control is relevant at all levels and above all at plant level.

Why totally blank out the trade unions' role at plant level in the Soviet Union? Could it be that to have done so would have meant an admission that the workers in the USSR and other socialist countries *do* have a say in discipline, safety, training, in the appointment of management and the apportioning of some of the profits? These are, after all, aspects of workers' control which the authors consider everywhere else to be of great importance, but have not yet been achieved in any capitalist country.

One is therefore driven to the conclusion that the failure to examine plant democracy was deliberate, for to have done so might have compelled the authors to say something positive about the USSR.

The problems facing Yugoslavia pose a problem for the authors. The Yugoslav experiment in self-management was, of course, until recently the outstanding example of the thesis advocated by the authors. Now that the Yugoslavs themselves are beginning to doubt their form of self-management because of the very serious economic, social and political difficulties in which they find themselves, the authors resort to assertions, without any examination in depth, that the problems have been caused by a whole number of factors—most of them extra-Yugoslav factors—and are not in any way to be found in self-management Workers' Councils.

The Yugoslav experiment is of tremendous importance in the search for forms of socialist democracy. But we will fail to learn from it if we approach the matter with pre-conceived ideas and a refusal to examine seriously all aspects of self-management to find out what went wrong and how to overcome the defects which became apparent.

FATHER GIRARDI ON LATIN AMERICA

Unità, daily paper of the Italian Communist Party, carried recently[3] an interesting interview with Father Girardi, Italian Roman Catholic priest, now lecturing on philosophy at the Catholic University at Paris and on theology at the Pastoral Institute of Brussels. Father Girardi is well known to those who have followed the international development of the Christian-Marxist dialogue, particularly for his books on "Marxism and Christianity", "Believers and Unbelievers for a New World" and "Christianity, Human Liberation and Class Struggle".

Recently he has made an extensive study-visit to different countries of Latin America. Despite the great diversity of the different lands he had visited, Father Girardi remarked a single dilemma common to them all—"capitalist development or revolution?"

Asked to expand on this thought, he continued:

> "It seems to me that the fundamental fact of Latin American reality is its subordination to North American economy. This relationship of international exploitation is today a necessary requirement of the capitalist system. South American capitalism can be characterised as dependent capitalism".

To this situation Father Girardi could see no other solution than:

> "a revolutionary transformation of society, a socialist alternative".

Such a transformation, he thought, could take place in diverse forms in different countries of Latin America. But all would share a common rejection of capitalism and a common conviction of the need for movement in the direction of a socialist alternative. The necessity of such an alternative was being recognised more and more by trade unionists, political groupings, economists, intellectuals, theologians and responsible people of the Church.

Asked how he saw the role of Christians in such a transformation, Father Girardi replied:

> "Christianity in its dominant form still remains a Christianity which, in different ways, supports the capitalist order, but a new factor is the presence of Christian forces that look in a socialist direction. The development of Christians with anti-capitalist positions can become a decisive factor".

[3] *Unita*, January 30, 1973, p. 3.

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Travelling through Latin America Father Girardi, in his words, witnessed the birth of:

> "a new type of Christian, who rejected the compromises of a certain type of Christianity with the ruling classes, and who was becoming the representative of a creative, revolutionary Christianity".

SOVIET VIEWS ON THE SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Very topical and timely is the publication in English of a collection of fifteen essays by Soviet scientists on the scientific/technological revolution.[4]

The titles of a few of them give some idea of the ground covered—"Marxist Dialectics and Scientific Discovery"; "Socialist Planning and Soviet Economic Development"; "The Scientific and Technological Revolution and Social Progress"; . . . "Specific Features and Social Consequences of the Scientific and Technological Revolution". . . . "The Scientific and Technological Revolution and the Social Structure of Capitalist Society". . . . "The Scientific and Technological Revolution and Bourgeois Economic Theories of Socialism"; "Two Economic Systems: Theory of Convergence"; "Man in the 'Industrial Society' "; "Is Herbert Marcuse's 'Critical Theory of Society' Critical?".

They confirm the statement made in the Foreword that "This collection purports to show, above all, how Soviet scholars understand the interrelation between technological and social progress. . . ."

Lack of space prevents detailed discussion of all the individual articles, but the last three mentioned are of particular interest to readers in capitalist countries. They deal with false ideas arising from the scientific and technological revolution which are widespread here and which we have to combat. These are the ideas propagated by writers like Raymond Aron, the American writers Sorokin and J. K. Galbraith, and the Dutch writer Tinbergen.

These claim that the scientific technological revolution, because it is characterised by a tremendous expansion of industry, by gigantic industrial undertakings, has given rise to a new kind of society—the "Industrial Society", which is the essential feature of both capitalist and socialist societies today and which over-rides the social and political differences between them.

From this there has developed the "convergence" theory, which proclaims that the two social systems are becoming more and more identical. Because of the increased role of the State in economic life and the development of forms of planning and of the "welfare state" in capitalist countries, alongside alleged "de-planning" and return to the market economy as a result of the economic reforms in the socialist countries, the two systems are said to be becoming more and more closely interwoven. Indeed, some of these writers declare that they will become completely integrated with one another in a new kind of society which will combine features of both.

The authors of the first two of the three articles mentioned, Ilya Dvorkin and Enokh Bregel, expose the fundamental errors of these ideas.

These are the quantitative approach, the concentration primarily on the growth of the productive forces while totally neglecting the decisive aspect of the nature of the social and class relations of production. They ask "Whose state does the planning?" "Planning for whom, by whom?" "Who owns the means of production?"

The last article in the collection while giving an extensive and in part sympathetic analysis of Marcuse's book *One Dimensional Man* and allowing due credit to what is positive and progressive in his ideas, pinpoints the weaknesses in his theories, particularly the concentration on conditions in the USA as the universal model for the capitalist countries. But above all his picture of capitalism's ability to process people into ideological "one-dimensional" uniformity and conformity by their control of the mass propaganda media is totally defeatist. It is the basis for his theory of a working class totally integrated into capitalism and incapable of making a socialist revolution. In Marcuse's own words, his "critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future . . . it remains negative".

STRATEGY OF STRUGGLE IN THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

We strongly recommend those of our readers who can understand German to study a small book (in the series of "Marxist Pocketbooks" published by the *Verlag Marxistische Blätter* written by Willi Gerns and Robert Steigerwald under the title of "Prob-

[4] "The Scientific and Technological Revolution: Effects and Prospects". £1: Progress Publishers, Moscow. Distributed in Great Britain by Central Books Ltd.

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lems of the Strategy of Anti-Monopoly Struggle".[5]

The book is divided into seven chapters. It begins with a general argument of the necessity for socialism. There follows an important second chapter—*The Struggle for Anti-Monopoly Democracy on the road to Socialism*—which relates the struggle for democracy to the struggle for socialism, explains the strategic conception of a stage of struggle for anti-monopoly democracy, examines the class alliances of such a stage, and includes an excellent critique of the ultra-leftist critics of the whole conception of such a stage.

The third chapter examines the way in which revolutionaries see the fight for reforms and at the same time carries a critique of contemporary German reformism.

The fourth chapter, which is of especial interest for British readers, deals with forms and means of struggle with particular reference to attitude to Parliament and the relation of parliamentary to extra-parliamentary struggle. There follows a chapter on the fight for peace and peaceful coexistence as one of they key forms of anti-monopoly struggle, a chapter on working class unity as a central question of Communist policy, and a final chapter on the Marxist theory of the Party.

It is of extreme interest to compare the strategy here outlined for advance to socialism in the German Federal Republic via the stage of struggle for anti-monopoly democracy with the strategy advanced in the *British Road to Socialism* and in the book by Jack Woddis of which we write above.

We will return to this subject and hope to publish in the not too distant future either in article form or in the form of extracts from this book an examination of the strategy of struggle for anti-monopoly democracy advanced by our comrades of the German Communist Party.

There has been in recent years a great blossoming of Marxist study and publication in the German Federal Republic. Indeed the publication list of the *Verlag Marxistische Blätter* (to which we shall return) bears ample witness to this.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARX MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Last month at a well-attended meeting in the TUC Congress Hall, the Marx Memorial Library started the observance of its 40th Anniversary. The theme of the meeting was "History of Marxist Education in Britain—Its History and Significance" and speakers included the Library's chairman, Andrew Rothstein, plus Bob Wright and "Moss" Evans, trade union leaders, John Gollan and Will Griffiths MP from the political parties and Professor Eric Hobsbawm and Maurice Dobb from the academic field. Chairing the event was the Librarian, John Williamson.

A feature of the meeting was the tribute to old timers who had been associated with the Library's predecessors—the Labour College, Plebs League, Socialist Sunday School and the early NCLC. Prepared for the occasion was a printed Roll of Honour, combined with the programme, which listed the 53 founders of the Marx Memorial Library and Workers' School, back in 1933 when a labour movement conference of 190 delegates, convened to observe the 50th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, decided to establish the Library as an answer to the Nazi book-burning.

Since those days many changes have taken place at the Library. After the war it ceased to be a school. Its present-day educational activities are promoted in order, as the Rules state, to further the object of providing "a library of books, periodicals and manuscripts relating to all aspects of Marxism and of the history of Socialism and the working class movement". But its basis—to hold out the opportunity for all to study the materials essential for understanding Marx, without discrimination between political trends in the working class movement—remains unchanged.

During the last decade the Library has expanded and developed in all fields. Its perspective was to reach out into the labour movement, among the youth and immigrant population and to involve new people, especially youth, from these fields into its active leadership.

The Library has one of the richest collections in Britain of material connected with the working class movement—books, pamphlets, conference reports, periodicals, journals and newspapers. The establishment of a Reference Room has contributed to its greater use by students from many universities and colleges, as well as by non-academic students.

Another feature in its growth was the development of its educational activities. During the last 18 months 1,328 people attended lectures, 317 attended 20 courses

[5] Willi Gerns and Robert Steigerwald—*Probleme der Strategie des antimonopolistischen Kampfes*, Verlag Marxistische Blätter, Frankfurt Am Main, 1973.

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(four to six classes each) plus an additional 300 at individual sessions, 185 participated in five all-day Discussion Seminars.

In 1963 the Library membership was 155 while today it exceeds 700 individual members and has nearly 60 organisations and university and college libraries affiliated in an associate capacity.[6]

During its 40th anniversary year, the Library, in addition to its successful meeting, will organise an International Discussion Conference on "The Contribution of Marxist Thought to the Progress of Mankind" and aims at a membership of 900 and to raise a Development Fund of £1,500.

Marxism Today congratulates the Library, its officers and members on its 40th anniversary.

WITH BANNERS FLYING

The struggles of the working class, of the radical, socialist, trade union and co-operative movement, are embodied not only in writings, speeches, pamphlets, manifestoes, leaflets, broadsheets, but in or on every type of visual object—posters, emblems, badges, armlets, coins, tokens and commemorative medals, prints, cartoons, jugs, mugs, tankards, bowls, vases, snuff boxes, teapots, gin bottles (and even pisspots for their enemies).

But perhaps nothing so directly and passionately evokes and represents the struggles and aspirations of the working people as their banners, for they are borne aloft at every ceremony, at commemorations and funerals, at meetings, rallies, at picketing and protest, above all at marches and demonstrations. They belong to the art, to the history, and to the struggle of the working class.

It is good that Frank Graham, who, as a publisher has done so much to do justice to the life, passions and efforts of the people of the Tyneside, Teeside and the whole North East, has reprinted now under the title of *Banner Parade* reproductions of a set of Lodge Banners of the Durham Miners Association recently exhibited at the DLI Museum and Arts Centre.[7] Few organisations have produced more or better banners than the Durham miners.

At the end of this month (April 25) an Exhibition will open at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, under the title of *Banner Bright* with a more comprehensive collection of banners from all over Britain (from Edinburgh to Tolpuddle), based on the research of John Gorman whose book on the history of Trade Union banners, will be published in May.

They will range over 150 years. By the side of the banner of the United Society of Tin Plate Workers (one of the oldest still preserved) will be that of the Electrical Trade Union designed by Walter Crane, the revolutionary banner of the United Mineworkers of Scotland and the original banner of the Great Dock Strike of 1889.

Banners reflect the aspirations of the working class, their calls to action, their strength sometimes and sometimes their illusions, but always their hopes.

They are an integral part of the working class and popular movement. It is shameful that they have sometimes been left to rot, and very fine that they are now at last being cherished. It is good to collect them but better still that they should be seen.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF *MARXISM TODAY* ON IRELAND

We are planning that the June issue of *Marxism Today* will be devoted to the struggle in Ireland. We are working now on this special issue with the co-operation of the Communist Party of Ireland.

We have in view the following articles: "The British White Paper" by Michael O'Riordan, General Secretary of the CPI; "The Historical Roots of Socialism in Ireland" by James Stewart, Assistant General Secretary of the CPI; "The Civil Rights Struggle" by Edwina Stewart, Hon. Secretary of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association; "Britain and Ireland in the Common Market" by A. Raftery, Editor of the *Irish Socialist*; "The Communist Party of Great Britain and the Irish Struggle" by Jack Woddis; "The History of the CPI" by Sean Nolan; "The Role of the Trade Unions in the Present Situation" by Betty Sinclair and "The Forces in the Irish National Liberation Struggle" by Tom Redmond.

It would be very helpful if the extra orders for this issue could be made to Central Books as soon as possible.

[6] Full membership is 50p Entrance Fee and £1.50 Subscription per year.

[7] *Banner Parade*, edited by W. A. Moyes, Frank Graham, 6 Queens Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, 60p.

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Crisis of Environment or Crisis of Capitalist Economy?

Vincent Labeyrie

(We thought that our readers would be interested to follow part of the discussion of the environmental crisis in the French Communist Party. We print below an article from the Cahiers du Communisme, *monthly organ of the French Communist Party, published in April of last year. Introducing the article the* Cahiers *wrote "Environmental problems, and the immediate and long term consequences of the widescale pollution of nature are being widely discussed today. Some people have even worked on the fears arising from the consequences of pollution to put forward opinions against the idea of scientific progress. Comrade Vincent Labeyrie is a specialist in this field, and this is his view". The article was translated by Stephen Gourlay with the help of Enid Davidson and Steve Iliffe. The subheads are ours).*

The power for man's intervention in the natural order has increased continuously:

> In the last century we have increased our speeds of communication by a factor of 10^7; our speeds of travel by 10^2; our speeds of data handling by 10^6; our energy resources by 10^3; our power of weapons by 10^6; our ability to control diseases by something like 10^2; and our rate of population growth to 10^3 times what it was like a few thousand years ago.[1]

This power is essentially positive—put to work in deepening our knowledge, and improving our living and working conditions—though it can have negative consequences, especially in a society in which research is oriented towards short term gains. Engels noted that in the past, actions of man have had disastrous consequences:

> When the Italians of the Alps used up the pine forests on the southern slopes, so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of water for the greater part of the year, and making it possible for them to pour still more furious torrents on the plains during the rainy seasons.[2]

Or again:

> What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertiliser for *one* generation of very highly profitable coffee trees—what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall washed away the unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only bare rock![3]

[1] J. Platt: *Science*, Vol. 166, No. 3909, pp. 1115-1121.

[2] F. Engels: *The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*, in *Marx and Engels—Selected Works* (one volume, London and Moscow 1968), p. 362.

[3] F. Engels: *op. cit.*, p. 364.

Contaminated World

Today, Strontium 90 and Cesium 137 produced by atomic explosions are to be found in all the oceans, in soils, and even in underground water sources. Their radio-activity has not even halved over the last 27 to 30 years. The atomic cloud produced by exploding the French bomb on Muroroa circled the earth in 15 days, and radio-active particles from it continue to fall on the earth.

On average, DDT may remain in the ground five years before being altered, and an average of three and a half years in the atmosphere before being precipitated in rainfall to the ground. Accumulated in the atmosphere, it constitutes a reserve that will continue to contaminate all parts of the world for many years. 1,000,000 tons of DDT reached the sea from the land in 1967 according to G. M. Woodwell.[4]

The mother's milk consumed by 40 per cent of babies in Sweden contains twice the maximum amount of dieldrin (as fixed by the World Health Office); American and English babies consume five times the maximum safe quantity.

Between 1920 and 1950, the amount of dust recorded in the glaciers of the Caucasus increased by 2300 per cent paralleling the industrialisation of Eastern Europe. The increase in the amount of lead in the snows of Greenland has followed the increase of motor traffic in the USA. In Switzerland, the amount of dust in the atmosphere at high levels has increased by 88 per cent in the last few years.

Jet aircraft have caused a 10 per cent increase in cirrus cloud cover (8,000-10,000 feet) over the Atlantic between Europe and North America.

In 1961, the water supply in the New Orleans region was contaminated by nitro-chloro-benzine emptied into the Mississippi from a factory 1,500 kilometres upstream.

[4] *Science*, Vol. 174, No. 4014, pp. 1101-1107.

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These few among hundreds of examples show just how much the consequences of our activities may spread out even to affect the whole world. Such results may be particularily long lasting, and may even appear several years after their initial causes. For example, 110 years after the opening of the Great Canal linking the Great Lakes with the Atlantic, the sea lamprey has begun to attack and destroy the trout in those lakes.[5]

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

The scientific and technological revolution has increased man's power tremendously; and the results of this increased power are manifested over long periods of time, and over the whole world.

Under these conditions we must take account of this new force if we are to continue to manage our natural resources; the rules for using a little wooden hammer have not been applicable since the invention of the steam-hammer.

The neglect of this common-sense principle in the management of natural resources may lead humanity into very serious difficulties. The human race is dangerously close to "the turning point beyond which the history of mankind will be on the decline."[6]

After having been ignored for a considerable length of time, the environmental crisis is being used to justify a pause in the development of science and technology.

A False Dichotomy

The false dichotomy—poverty or pollution—presents the environmental crisis as the unavoidable consequence of the development of science and technology. A poll conducted by IFOP and published in *L'Humanité Dimanche* (February 2, 1972), showed how far this idea is accepted by the public; 48 per cent of those interviewed saw more disadvantages in technological and industrial progress, while only 23 per cent saw more advantages. (And it was only among the more highly educated people that there was a majority who did not think that technological progress held more disadvantages than advantages.)

It is because capitalist ideology (and particularily positivism), which in the last hundred years has persuaded the people that increased technological and industrial development automatically leads to a better life than today, some people blame that development itself for the problems.

It is essential, therefore, to examine the role of the capitalist system itself in the crisis, and to show that it is not technical and industrial progress *per se* which is responsible for the crisis. Until this point is clarified some people will be unable to understand that, by changing the system, it will be possible to resolve the problem.

Bearing in mind that the results of human activity are widely dispersed both in time and in space, it is evident that an economy based on the idea of short term profit is in fundamental contradiction to a scientific use of natural resources.

As Engels pointed out:

> In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is predominantly concerned only about the immediate, the most tangible result; and then surprise is expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be quite different, and most likely quite the opposite in character. . . .[7]

Today the working class and its allies are faced with the question: can one allow an outmoded economic system to pillage the natural resources of the earth, and thus compromise the very future of humanity?

The mass movements against imperialism throughout the world show that it is possible to mobilise large numbers of people on problems of this kind. The struggle for the preservation of the environment is of this kind, and, by its very nature, can also unite those social strata which are not directly exploited by the monopolies.

Technical solutions can be found for most of the problems—if we can overcome the problems of putting a man on the moon, there is no doubt that we are equally capable of resolving the problems of which the nature is still the subject of scientific debate.

It is with this in mind that governments of capitalist countries have created ministerial posts concerned with the problems of the environment. However, these institutions often serve only to mask the fundamental issues.

The specialised nature of the professional strata has led to a compartmentalisation of knowledge, which is related more to the utilitarian character of 19th century capitalist economy than to the needs of deepening our knowledge and understanding. The narrow, restricted approaches engendered by this development lead to inadequate technical propositions which mask potential solutions, and create a pessimism that permeates scientific circles.

Dialectical Approach Needed

Therefore it is necessary to develop a theoretical approach to the questions raised by the crisis of the environment.

[5] W. I. Aron, *Science*, Vol. 174, No. 4004, pp. 13-20.

[6] F. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*—(translated from French—Tr.).

[7] F. Engels, *The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*, in *Marx and Engels—Selected Works*, (one volume, London and Moscow 1968), p. 364.

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Ecology, through the study of the interaction of living organisms and other elements of nature, has become the true science of the economy of natural systems. Thus it provides a methodical approach to the problem of how can man integrate himself in the natural systems, to turn the organisation of natural systems to his benefit.

So, we are justified in seeing the development of ecology as a new, fundamentally dialectical approach to the study of nature.

The adoption of an ecological viewpoint requires a revolution in method, particularly in our country where researchers (often unconsciously) bear the marks of positivist pragmatism. But this revolution will have to be carried out under socialism.

The effects of extensive compartmentalisation in research are too far-reaching for them to be erased completely and rapidly; certain errors made in socialist countries, now in the course of correction, bear witness to this.

But we would fall into the technocratic illusion of the positivists if we supposed that a correct theoretical analysis of the scientific problems is sufficient to resolve the environmental crisis in the capitalist countries.

Capitalist Practice

The experience of France and Britain are examples of this. In Britain, the Labour government had set up an organisation for the protection of nature, employing committed and competent research workers in laboratories. Concrete and valuable propositions were formulated by them. But under pressure from the most conservative part of English capitalism, Heath's government is eager to liquidate this body.

In France, the activity of the Minister of the Environment remains confined to verbal statements; the separation of statements of intent from any real action shows him to be the keeper of the government's conscience in the face of public demands.

The American situation is much more confused. Some financial groups are using public money to rebuild, thus strengthening their powers of home and internal competition under the cover of re-adapting their plant to the demands of the environment. Similar events, though on a small scale, have occurred in France.

Thus the capitalists try to both hide the fundamental issues of the environmental crisis, and to justify their use of public funds to strengthen their companies. This is brought out particularly in a pamphlet by J. R. Huntley—*Man's Environment and the Atlantic Alliance*—edited by NATO. With reference to a short speech made by Nixon to the NATO Foreign Affairs Ministers on April 10, 1969, Huntley attempts to prove that the defence of the environment and of life in general is already provided for in Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty of April 4, 1949. Thus first of all he wants to try to obtain the collaboration of other scientists with NATO, (often those who are opposed to military ends by the nature of their work), while at the same time he attempts to find a new role for NATO—the existence of which is being questioned by the increasingly urgent demand for the ending of the military blocs.

Huntley limits the crisis by considering only the technological aspects of the environmental crisis. Thus:

> To the extent that the problem is one of creating a better environment for man, it is a problem of the transfer and application of technology. NATO is remarkably qualified to do this . . . because NATO can work fast and is ready for action . . . because NATO is the political expression of the essential links between Europe and North America. (translated from French).

In attempting to deny the culpability of the capitalist system and in order to camouflage the fundamental contradictions of that system which have led to the present crisis, emphasis is placed on the importance of the demographic aspects of the problem. Barry Commoner demonstrated that this point is logical:

> If we consider the domination of social welfare (or the ecosphere) by private interests as being unchangeable, then survival implies an immediate and brutal limitation of the population. . . . This is to reject the identical right to a human life for all the people of the world.[8]

The contribution of the United States to the world environmental problem is such that would not be expected taking into consideration that its population—203 million people (5.7 per cent of the world population) in the USA—use 30 per cent of the natural resources of the world.

Is not the level of life in the United States linked to the impact of the American economy? This brings us to the fundamental question: does not the capitalist economy, in ignoring all factors save that of profit, lead to a degradation of the environment?

Without repeating the remarkable demonstration by Barry Commoner, a quick analysis of several specific problems will show that Engels was correct, and that the capitalist economy is responsible for this environmental crisis.

THE PROBLEM OF ENERGY

P. and A. Erlich pose the question: "Do the

[8] *The Closing Circle*, 1971 p. 297. (Translated from French—Tr.).

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energy systems impose a limit to the growth of the human population?"[9]

Before considering this problem we should note that the First Law of Thermodynamics, concerning conservation of energy, states that nothing is lost and nothing is gained. In other words, the total amount of energy in the whole universe remains constant.

The sun is the source of energy which determines all the phenomena of the earth. All our activities and motions result from solar energy—which has been trapped and converted into chemical forms by plants, and is released in our bodies during the breakdown of food. Solar energy induces evaporation from the oceans which leads to the formation of clouds and hence rain, and also controls the functioning of the water and wind systems of the globe. Energy in the form of coal, petrol, and natural gas also originated from the sun having been changed into a chemical form by plants and then stored as a reduced form of carbon.

There are of course other sources of energy in addition to that of the sun—tidal forces, vulcanicity, radioactivity from minerals that existed long before the formation of the earth—but these are negligible amounts of energy in relationship to the global energy balance. The temperature of the earth and the other phenomena of the earth's surface are entirely a result of the energy of the sun.

[9] *Population, Resources and Environment* 1970. (No page—translated from French—Tr.).

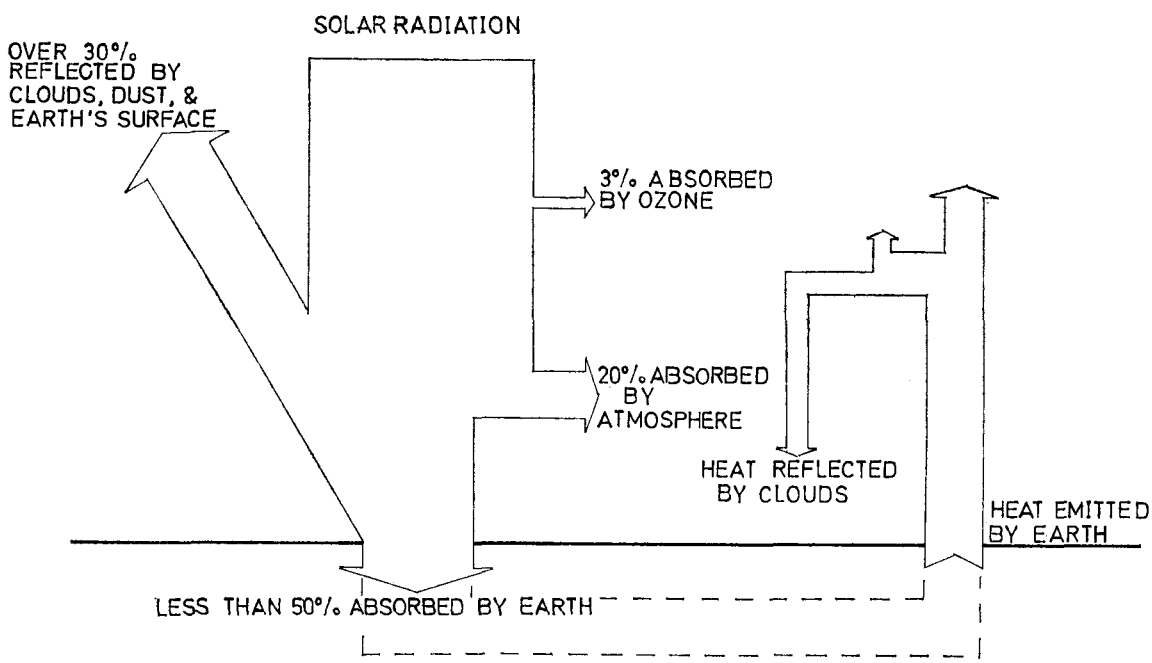
The Impact of Man

The MIT study, "The Impact of Man on the Global Environment," (1970) made this point concerning our knowledge in this field. It is impossible to understand what the basis of an energy policy for mankind should be without briefly considering the situation.

The solar radiation reaching the limits of the terrestial system (the outer layers of the atmosphere) is equal to about 120cal/cm²/hour. Between 25 and 50 kilometres up in the stratosphere, ozone absorbs about 3 per cent of this incident radiation (mainly the ultra-violet rays). In the lower atmosphere, water vapour, gases, clouds, and dust absorb a further 20 per cent of the incident solar radiation. In addition, about 30 per cent of the incident radiation is reflected (albedo effect) mainly by the clouds (75 per cent of the albedo effect), and also by glaciers, snow, and the oceans.

Thus only a fraction of the incident rays reach the surface of the earth. This corresponds to a total

DIAGRAM 1


SOLAR RADIATION
OVER 30% REFLECTED BY CLOUDS, DUST, & EARTH'S SURFACE
3% ABSORBED BY OZONE
20% ABSORBED BY ATMOSPHERE
HEAT REFLECTED BY CLOUDS
HEAT EMITTED BY EARTH
LESS THAN 50% ABSORBED BY EARTH

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF WORLD ENERGY BALANCE

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of 1.5×10^{18} kWh of energy for the whole of the earth.

The surface of the earth becomes overheated and gets rid of some of the heat by conduction to the atmosphere. Moreover, the water which had evaporated from the oceans (due to the absorption of solar radiation) condenses in the atmosphere, thus setting free its latent energy. These two sources constitute heat radiation that is emitted from the earth, and this is in the form of infra-red rays. However, the atmosphere forms a partial barrier to these heat rays while at the same time being more open to rays from the sun. In this way, in clear weather, 10 per cent of the infra-red rays are dispersed in space while 65 per cent of the solar radiation reaches the surface; in cloudy weather, only 5 per cent of the infra-red rays are lost to space and 45 per cent of solar radiation reaches the surface of the earth. (figures published by MIT).

The temperature at the earth's surface thus results from the relationship between the incident and the emitted radiation. A change in atmospheric conditions (an increase in cloud cover; an increase in the amount of dust; in the amount of carbon dioxide) interrupts the energy balance of the earth by modifying the albedo effect and also the "opacity" of the atmosphere (see diagram 1).

> There is probably nothing more important to man's future on this planet than an understanding of the long range effects of his activities. . . . The stability of climate. for example, is not known, nor is it known how close we are to the limit where another ice age could be triggered. The possibility that we might inadvertently set off an irreversible reaction must constantly be kept in mind.[10]

In particular, special precautions must be taken in the use of the stratosphere—taking into account the high degree of stability of atomic particles, and the importance of photo-chemical reactions. However, we still ignore the potential consequences of supersonic flight on the climate.

The main problem is posed by the industrial consumption of energy. At the moment, the amount of commercially used energy increases by about 4.5 per cent per annum. On the basis of this rate, by the year 2000 we shall need 23×10^{13} kWh of energy per year. These figures will probably be low estimates since the United States, which alone consumes 37 per cent of the world's commercially used energy, increased its consumption by 5 per cent per year between 1965 and 1969 (in spite of the economic disturbances in that year due to the lack of electricity).

In 1969, 4,567,900kWh of electricity was produced by the major economic powers (excluding the People's Republic of China), of which only 20 per cent was from hydro-electric schemes.[11] This means that 80 per cent of the electricity was produced in thermal power stations. Thus we can estimate that in 1969 more than 90 per cent of the total energy consumed in the world came from fossil fuels. The action of man sets free potential energy in the form of heat from the fossil fuels (which here includes nuclear energy) and this has the effect of modifying the energy balance of the world. Without man, the fossil fuels would liberate little of their energy and would play virtually no part in the energy balance of the planet.

MIT, in their 1970 report, consider that: "Energy lost during the processes of production and consumption affects the climate." P. F. Chapman (1970) has estimated that the earth's climate will be greatly affected when the potential energy released by human activities exceeds between 2 per cent and 5 per cent of the received incident solar energy. However, this level has already been reached in an area of over 1 million hectares in the Los Angeles region, and the MIT estimates that, by the year 2000, 90 million hectares in the east of the United States will have passed that level.

This probably also applies to the triangle containing Dunkirk, Amsterdam, and Coblence.

Use of Energy Resources

Certain American economists have proposed a reduction in economic growth to avoid the grave consequences of this development. P. F. Chapman has shown that there is another solution—we should develop the use of energy sources that occur naturally and are thus in harmony with the environment. These are hydraulic energy, wind (which is hardly used), tidal energy (which is only used very slightly), and geothermal energy, which could be important in certain areas.

The needs of humanity cannot be provided for by any one of these means, but together they may assure the future of the economy for the coming few decades, leading to a period when we have developed techniques of direct utilisation of the sun's energy to guarantee the future needs of humanity.

By using these sources of energy, man will tap a small fraction of the free energy that goes to make up the energy balance of the world. Potential energy only enters into the world balance of energy when liberated by man.

Research into the uses of these sources of energy has been neglected in the capitalist countries because of pressure from vested financial groups. In France, the programme for using tidal forces was suspended

[10] S. F. Singer, *Science*, Vol. 170, No. 3954, p. 125.

[11] J. Beaujau Garnier, *Images économiques du Monde*, 1971.

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after the building of the prototype at Rance. Each time the excuse is the use of an energy source that gives an immediate and better profit.

THE EXHAUSTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Coal, petroleum, and natural gas are natural chemical products arising from the incomplete decomposition of living material. Thus they contain part of the chemical energy accumulated by plants during photosynthesis. The presence of these fossil organic combustibles shows that, under certain circumstances, living material has not been able to decompose completely. This has never affected more than a fraction of living matter, and the importance of sites is due to the length of time over which the accumulation occurred. The formation of these fossil organic materials only took place in marshes, bogs, and certain parts of the oceans; that is why these areas increase the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere. However, the rate of consumption is more than a thousand times that of formation, and under these circumstances, the massive burning of the deposits to free their potential energy must lead to their exhaustion in the coming centuries.

Organic material is the basis of synthetic organic chemistry, which is one of the most important industrial applications of the last 50 years. This industry only uses the deposits at a very low rate: the development of carbon chemical industries in mining areas would not only provide an answer to the problems of managing those areas, but would also be a healthy resources policy for the future of mankind. However, this would be incompatible with the characteristic search for immediate profit which is the priority of state monopoly capitalism. The incessant world wide plundering of coal, petrol, and other organic resources by the capitalist societies is another example of their policies. It has been estimated that reserves of lead, zinc, tin, gold, silver, platinum, copper, and tungsten will be exhaused by the end of this century—that is within the next 30 to 40 years.[12]

In the light of this problem there has been an improvement in the processes of extraction to enable poorer quality minerals to be used. Techniques of exploiting the sea bed deposits have also been explored—after having pillaged the surface of the world, the capitalist system hopes to find an Eldorado in the ocean depths.

A. J. Coale, the director of the population research department at the university of Princeton, wrote that: "In the production of any metallic element, the easier sources are exploited first."[13] Also: "Because the number of deposits is fixed, the urgency of finding new resources increases as the unexploited superficial deposits become rarer."[14]

Increase in Waste Materials

Paralleling the exhaustion of raw materials is the increase in waste materials. In 1970, at a conference on 'The protection of man against pollution,' held at Royan, Y. Cheret said that: "Of all French production, that which attained the highest growth rate was the production of waste material—on average 17 per cent per year." Often the waste products are pollutants and they contaminate the air, the water, and the soil. For example, in the United States, the exhausts of cars and lorries releases 180,000 *tonnes* of lead each year (French lead production in the record year of 1970 was 121,000 *tonnes*!)

Under the capitalist economic system, primary raw materials are used as in a linear process—primary materials are used to make merchandise that after use becomes waste. The system is like two connected vases: the first represents primary materials and the second waste—as the first empties, so the second fills up. (Diagram 2)

K. E. Boulding, an American economist, denounced this situation as follows: "The normal economic processes make diffuse that which was concentrated. We use minerals and combustible materials and disperse them in the oceans or on the earth in the form of waste material."[15] Another economist wrote: " . . . there is not an air pollution problem and a water pollution problem; there is a materials disposal problem."[16] Solow, like Boulding, indicates the solution—recycling of materials.

Recycling of Materials

In proposing this they would do away with one of the defects of capitalism—which was clearly brought out by Marx:

> Capitalist production, by collecting the population in great centres, and causing an ever-increasing preponderance of town population, on the one hand concentrates the historical motive power of society; on the other hand, it disturbs the circulation of matter between man and the soil, *i.e.*, prevents the return to the soil of its elements consumed by man in the form of food and clothing; it therefore violates the conditions necessary to lasting fertility of the soil. By this action it destroys at the same time the health of the town labourer and the intellectual life of the rural labourer.[17]

[12] H. Brown, *Scientific American*, Vol. 233, No. 3, p. 160, 1970.

[13] *Science*, Vol. 170, No. 3954, pp. 132-136.

[14] T. S. Lovering, *Resources and Man*, 1969. (No page—translated from French—Tr.).

[15] *Environmental Crisis*, 1970. (No page—translated from French—Tr.)

[16] R. H. Solow, *Science*, Vol. 173, No. 3996, pp. 498-503.

[17] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Chap. XV, Section 10, p. 505. (London and Moscow, 1965).

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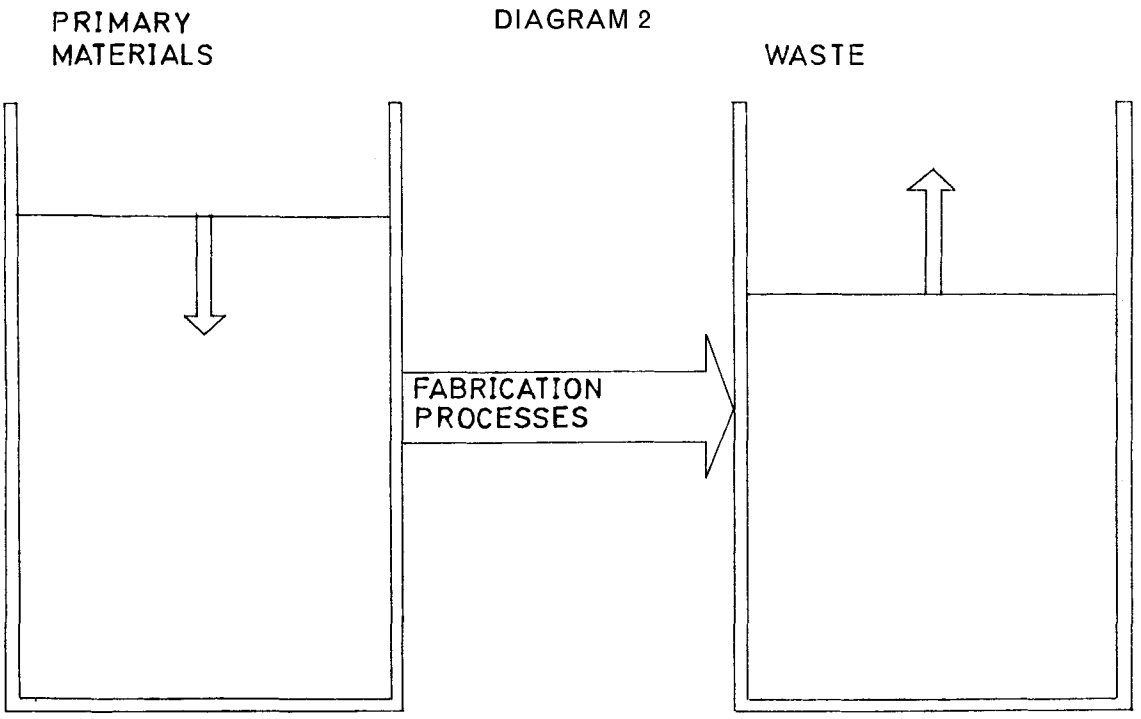
DIAGRAM 2



In this remarkably clear analysis, Marx underlines the difference between a primitive rural economy that empirically respects the fundamental rules of ecology and the recycling of materials, and capitalist economy, with its characteristic attitude towards natural materials.

The report of the Armand Commission (May 11, 1970), "For an Environmental Policy", emphasised the importance of this law of ecology and its meaning for the organisation of the human economy:

> An increasing amount of our waste products are susceptible to re-use provided that, wherever possible, a cycle permitting the re-introduction of certain by-products of consumption into the production cycle is devised. This is the same way that re-cycling in nature permits, in principle, a perpetual renascence.[18]

But the report immediately adds: "recycling is often partial and only slightly economic."

Marx, in a very important passage, shows that recycling of material contributes to the development of the economy:

> By showing the proper methods for returning the residues of production and of social consumption, their excrements, into the cyclic course of reproduction, it (chemistry) converts these "non-values" into so many additionally stored elements, without the addition of capital.[19]

Capitalism and Recycling

At our present level of technology we can change most waste materials, including plastics, from being useless into potentially useful things. It has been shown that 90 per cent of industrial waste could be recuperated.[20] However, under state monopoly capitalism, such possibilities remain unused. Jerome Monod, a delegate of the Aménagement du Territoire et l'Action Régionale (DATAR), showed that:

> The business manager only takes consideration of the direct responsibilities of investment for which he must account . . . since he is not made directly responsible for other costs. These however fall directly on the tax payer at several stages removed from their source.[21]

Thus capitalist economists, by "externalising" certain of their costs, ensure that these costs are met by society as a whole. The costs of pollution and the shortage of natural resources which have arisen out of an economic system based solely on profit are passed on to the working class.

[18] 2000, p. 17, from the series "un premier programme pour l'environnement".

[19] K. Marx, *Le Capital* t.III, Chap. XXIII, p. 46. (Translated from French—Tr.)

[20] D. Clutterbuck, *New Scientist*, Vol. 49, No. 734, pp. 58-60.

[21] "L'aménagement du territoire", ("Que sais-je?", 1971).

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A representative of Pechiney, commenting on the introduction of a recycling technique to eliminate a red mud, said that his firm did not see "the use of complicating one's existence by rushing into new forms of production."[22]

The document "Towards an Environmental Policy," cited above starts from this principle in announcing that the cost to the community for the fight against environmental degradation will have to be raised. They consider that, "a sewage processing plant for a town represents an initial investment of 50-250F per person, and an annual running cost of between 8F and 15F each." The government does not envisage the recycling of waste water by industry, which contributes 72 per cent of the polluted waters: these are "external" matters which are the responsibility of the community. Pollution is socialised, while the means of production remains in private hands.

In face of the degradation of rivers, and under pressure from the public, the Swedish government has modified its legislation concerning pollutants. In this way, recycling of water used in paper mills has reduced waste materials from 1000kg per *tonne* of paper to 1.5 kg per *tonne*—and at the same time has reduced the cost of paper.

In New York, one of the dirtiest towns in the world, the local government has just abolished taxes on industries that use old paper.

Under the threat of economic stagnation and the pressures of population the capitalist system will undertake measures to adjust itself to the environment. However, these measures are always taken at the expense of the community, and especially at the expense of the wage earners.

Progressive Approach to Recycling

Only a democratic popular unity government can immediately nationalise industries with the view to "guaranteeing the restructuring of the apparatus of production in accordance with social needs." It is the only way to end the contradiction which exists under monopoly capitalism between the demands of immediate profit, and the use of primary materials, and the destruction of the environment. Only a democratic popular unity government would be able to apply the legal measures to provide effective protection. The arrangement proposed in the article above by A. J. Coale "obliging industries to take water from below their factories and return it above them", which would have the effect of getting rid of all pollution, must remain a dream while the monopolies have all the power in their hands.

The capitalist system separates the problems posed by the exhaustion of natural resources from those of the accumulation of waste materials. However, our programme underlines clearly that "in future, the solutions will lie in modifications to the manufacturing processes of the finished products rather than in the treatment of used water and polluted air."

This policy, which is the only one that would not destroy the natural resources or the environment, is feasible. In Moscow, for example, the water appropriations plans show that all industrially used water must be recycled.

A CONCLUSION

These notes on the problems of the equilibriums of energy and the conservation of resources are only a small part of the problems raised by the environmental crisis. A complete review is necessary.

Many other fields are hardly in a brilliant state either: degradation of the physical and chemical properties of the soils leaves them unfit for agricultural use; the extinction of several species of fish and marine animals through over-use; the destruction of thousands of species of plant and animal life of which the food, pharmaceutical, and industrial properties could have been used.

The revision of the basis of exploitation of nature by the capitalist system is called for. Some researchers have put the cause of the crisis as something inherent in the system itself.

They do not think that in the "industrial society" (J. K. Galbraith) the system of industry and technological progress are in themselves the cause. Rather they question the basis of the system of capitalist economy: "Narrow 'conventional' economic criteria are at best inadequate and at worst disastrously misleading if used as the sole basis for decisions about natural resources."[23] "If we accept the solutions offered by the existing market forces, then probably we shall devastate and waste part of our resources."[24] A clearer answer has come from Barry Commoner: "The ecological imperatives call out that we should direct the production processes within a social economy—a criterion that is directly in conflict with the idea of private profit."[25]

K. E. Boulding has denounced the absurdity of criteria like the GNP for determining the state of an economy. As, for example, it only takes into account the commercialised factors, the riches of a country increase with the importance and frequency of traffic jams because they contribute effectively to the amount of petrol consumed.

In the passage cited above, Marx noted that the capitalist system has disturbed the circulation of materials between man and the environment. This is partly linked with urban concentration which is

[22] *L'Humanité Dimanche*, February 2, 1972.

[23] A. W. Eipper, *Science*, Vol. 169, No. 3940, pp. 11-15.

[24] N. Wollman, *The New Economics of Resources*, Daedalus 1967. (No page—translated from French—Tr.).

[25] *The Closing Circle*, 1971, p. 287. (Translated from French—Tr.).

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"characterised by the continuing transfer of substantial amounts of matter from remote, uninhabited sites to urban centres."[26]

The economic backwardness of countries that are in the course of decolonisation is such that those countries which have not opted for a socialist system refuse to take into account the problems raised by the exploitation. The Head of the Department of Biology at the University of Guyana wrote that: "your environment, despite all the ravages of industrialisation and city culture, is not only much better than it was 100 years ago, but is a paradise compared with ours *now*."[27] Such reasoning is extremely dangerous; in the Soviet Union, great efforts are now being made to repair the damage done during the first five year plans. The underdeveloped countries that have recently taken the socialist path (China, Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam) are avoiding these pitfalls. Thus in China, an "injunction (is made) to workers and peasants to reuse (recycle) industrial and agricultural wastes."[28]

The USSR, Poland and Hungary . . . have introduced legal dispositions to ensure that industry does not have negative effects. In the USSR, consultative bodies at the level of the Republics have a veto over all fitting-out projects. At Rostov, a workshop was closed following an alteration of the atmosphere in the area. The project to turn the eastern Siberian rivers towards the Aral Sea is waiting for a fuller ecological study for the possible environmental effects.

"In Eco-Utopia all resource management decisions will be firmly based on ecological principles."[29] This can only become a reality under a socialist government.

Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment

Not only does the capitalist system care nothing about the renewal of the natural resources, but it artificially accelerates their exhaustion.

It encourages a high rate of renewal of personal effects, even though often they are still perfectly serviceable, To ensure that people partake in this system, whether or not they want to, the capitalist system removes from the market the "old" models which means that spare parts are not available, and forces people to buy a completely new model. Thus it seems that the GNP of a country rises! In fact there has been a waste of energy—through the waste of human labour and of primary materials. With such wastage, the time is approaching where there will be such a shortage of primary materials and energy as to drag the human economy down.

In this context one can understand the comment that in the USSR: "more emphasis is placed on prolonging the life of various products. In other words it is worthwhile to use labour to pick up bottles and collect junk."[30]

It is our hope to show the contradiction that exists between national interests, the future of the country, and the rape by the capitalist system. We must organise mass criticism of this system, and at the same time in collaboration with other scientists, especially ecologists and geophysicists, we must have concrete proposals in the national interest that we can put into effect.

The crisis of the environment is due to the capitalist pillage of natural resources. The capitalist system in being obedient only to the law of maximum profit has led to the degradation of the quality of life. We must not let them develop the campaign of mystification which pretends to trap humanity in the dilemna of poverty or pollution, and must organise a strong reaction from the masses. One of the first consequences of the establishment of a democratic popular unity government will be the ending of the contradiction between the protection of the environment and the natural resources on the one hand, and the release of science and the development of the economy on the other.

[26] E. S. Savas. *Science*, Vol. 174, No. 4007, p. 365.
[27] H. A. Drayton, *New Scientist*, Vol. 148, No. 721, pp. 26-28.
[28] L. A. Orleans and R. P. Suttmeier, *Science*, Vol. 170, No. 3963, pp. 1173-1176.
[29] P. Newbould, *New Scientist*, Vol. 47, No. 711, pp. 191-193.
[30] M. I. Goldman, *Science*, Vol. 170, No. 3953, pp. 37-42.

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The Making of a Clydeside Communist

Bill Cowe

(Bill Cowe was District Organiser for Scotland 1939-41 and Industrial Organiser 1949-65. He is currently member of the National Appeals Committee of the Communist Party)

Baptism

It was in 1919 that there happened in the Royal Burgh of Rutherglen a strike of boys who were employed by the Avonbank Co-operative Society as milk-carriers. At thirteen years of age I was the moving spirit in getting them together to demand better pay and conditions.

For delivering milk seven days a week at six o'clock in the morning in fair or foul weather we received two shillings and six pence per week. It was lively work, in fact hard work, carrying about twenty cans of milk, cream and breakfast rolls, running upstairs, knocking on doors and waiting for the empty can being given back to you. Good boots, thick stockings, gloves, balaclava and overcoat were essential equipment supplied by the parents of the boys. Of course there were the tips from customers, but only at Easter, July Fair holidays or at Christmas or New Year to any extent.

Anyway we were dissatisfied and the boys at the five Co-op shops agreed that I write a letter to the Co-op Board of Management requesting that our pay be increased to three shillings and sixpence with a supply of oilskins for rainy mornings. We got no reply and we decided to take strike action.

Strike Leader

As strike leader I wrote another letter to the board informing them that they had not acknowledged my first letter, that we had decided to strike for the demands and that the strike was almost 100 per cent. Only two blacklegs had gone into work.

Again no reply was sent and the strike continued for ten days. The whole town supported the milk boys. The Co-op was castigated and many ILP and Labour Party members were pressing for the Co-op to lead the way in pay and concede the demands.

Then victory came. The leading woman in each of the five shops was instructed to ask the boys to return to work and inform them that their demands had been granted in full.

Members of the board came to congratulate the boys on their action and explained that both my letters had been seriously discussed, but a narrow majority agreed to disregard the first letter as "boy's mischief". The second letter and the action caused shock and easily won a majority for the milk boys' demands.

A Socialist Home

I was rather proud and inspired by the outcome. But it is not hard to fathom how I came to agitate and organise it. In a sense it was quite a natural development.

Born on September 8, 1906, in a single-end in Rutherglen's High Street, my parents were already socialists.

My grandfather was a rabid reader of Burns. William Morris, Tom Johnstone's *History of the Working Classes in Scotland* and *Our Noble Families* were all the most precious working class literature of the times. Keir Hardie, James Welsh, Patrick McGill were all read avidly as was Blatchford's *Merrie England* and *Britain for the British.*

My father and mother were both from railway families. My father was born in Aberdeen and my mother in the Blocks, Hurlford, Ayrshire. Both grandfathers were engine drivers at Polmadie (Glasgow) and my father a special class signalman in the Glasgow Central Station. All were strong union men and active in the trade union branch.

Two Schools

At the age of five I first went to school—the Burgh School, Rutherglen—and was at the same time taken to the Rutherglen Socialist Sunday School. This was the beginning of my socialist education.

Could anyone ask for a better one? The Socialist Sunday School was a growing movement during and after the First World War and the Rutherglen school was one of the biggest.

Socialist ideas spread quickly among those who were against the war. Conscientious objectors (of

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which there were a growing number) were the heroes of the children who attended. Pacifists were also admired and respected, and the local ILP took a fraternal interest in the school supplying lecturers each Sunday.

I grew up in this political atmosphere, and over the years became a leader in the school. Davie Hardie, brother of Keir, was the founder of the school, and he and I worked together developing it. In summertime we organised rambles and picnics. We had a Socialist Sunday School football league; a swimming club with an annual gala in Calder Street baths, Glasgow; an annual festival in City Halls, Glasgow and visits to the art galleries, People's Palace and to pantomimes. In all these activities the Rutherglen School played a big part beside the Clydebank, Bridgeton College, and Govan schools.

'Bairns of the Toffs'

By this time some of us had grown to being teenagers. Some left school at fourteen and got jobs. I won a bursary and went to Rutherglen Higher Grade school for three years to qualify for the intermediate certificate.

It was a big sacrifice for my parents but being convinced socialists they had no qualms about the need for education.

Those three years helped me no end. I went from the Burgh school to one that was in the main attended by what we named the 'bairns of the toffs' with their kilts and Rover Scout badges. I had to study and play with entirely new schoolmates from up-the-hill Rutherglen and Burnside.

With my new blue jersey and skull cap, I must have stuck out like a sore thumb as coming from the proletarian Burgh school. After some initial encounters, including physical incidents, I won respect and acceptance even to the extent of training some Rover Scouts in swimming and life-saving. But I never once failed to state the socialist case when the opportunity offered, and above all I learnt to mix and discuss with my schoolmates.

War and Revolution

I remember two things clearly in the teens of this century. The first was the outbreak of the First World War. It meant that in school our geography was adjusted so that the German Ocean was no longer named so. In the bakers' shop the "German biscuit" was renamed the "empire biscuit".

Second was the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. All socialists rejoiced and supported the new Soviet Power. But among the upper classes there was fear and anger. The press vigorously attacked "Bolshevism" as the big danger and raged about "Bolshevik murderers".

Neither events exactly fitted the socialist precepts we had been taught and caused me and others of my age to seek knowledge and understanding. I suppose being young we proceeded, unwittingly, largely, to do just that.

A Watershed in Life

The need for a discussion group grew urgently and I had the matter raised in the Management Committee of the Socialist Sunday School. The result was that I along with others organised such a discussion group. About thirty people, mostly teenagers, attended.

The third talk raised the whole political level. I invited a speaker from the Young Communist League in Glasgow. Two of them came: Matthew Bird and Johnnie Mitchell. It was marvellous to hear a clear political policy being enunciated and underlined by appropriate questions and readings from Shelley.

For me it brought the realisation that I must know more about scientific socialism, the Bolshevik Revolution and the big home battles that were now developing around the Triple Alliance of dockers, miners and railwaymen.

First Job

I had left school and was looking for a job as a railway clerk which was the aim of my parents. They were correct in thinking that the railways offered a guaranteed day and week and that an office job there was a good one. For four months I waited. On three occasions I sat examinations in Buchanan Street, Glasgow head office, and was told I was most satisfactory but there were no vacancies.

Rather disgusted and being three months with no work, I asked the chief clerk if there were any jobs on the uniform side. I came home with a full uniform under my arm and a designation to start work at Kirkhill station as a junior porter receiving eight shillings a week.

The year was 1924, and things were beginning to happen.

Das Kapital

I joined the No 10 Glasgow branch of the NUR which was my father's branch, and largely composed of signalmen. I had already joined the Rutherglen branch of the ILP in 1923, and was still active in the Socialist Sunday School with Davie Hardie passing over the main responsibility to me.

The Glasgow Labour College was doing good work purveying Marxian economics. There was

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a real shortage of Marx's works. The very first translations of Marx and Engels came from the USA: Kerr's edition of *Das Kapital*. I could not pay ten shillings for it, and it was a tremendous day when my father gave a present for my eighteenth birthday. On opening it, there was my copy of *Das Kapital*.

Other books became available such as *The People's Marx* and Mary Marcy's *Shop Talks on Economics*. The Glasgow Labour College published an *Outline of Economic Geography* and the *Plebs* magazine came out monthly dedicated to the principle of independent working-class education.

Every Sunday morning I attended Labour College classes in the AUBTW hall in High Street, Glasgow (the bricklayers still have the hall today). Economics lecturers included Joe Payne (later to become a Labour councillor in Glasgow), Tommie Clark (engineering union) and J. S. Clarke.

John MacLean

John MacLean gave a lecture and I attended. It was first-class—so much so that I began attending his public meetings in the St Mungo Halls.

My parents went with me on some occasions for my mother had a personal interest in John MacLean. She had been a pupil in Polmadie Public School and John was the headmaster. By this time he was the outstanding working-class figure on the Clyde, and was supported and revered by many people.

Both my mother and father admired him for his consistent fight for socialism and as first consul in Glasgow for the Soviet Government of Russia. But they grew apprehensive of his suspicions and lack of trust in any other working-class fighter.

They told me about his hounding by the police, his imprisonment and harsh treatment by the authorities and how spying and interrogation had led to a state of mind in which he trusted no one. The result was he became individualist, insular. But to the last he was a revolutionary, against capitalist society and for Socialism.

A Communist

All this helped my education and was a big factor in steering my future activities. I now found that no paper suited me more than the *Workers' Weekly* and the *Worker*. The biggest thought in my mind was a historical fact coming from the teaching of the Labour College: that in the American Civil War the decision was made on the battlefield and not in Parliament. Independence, a change of society as in Russia in 1917, could only be brought about by united mass action of the people, the working class.

So in 1924 I resigned with five others from the ILP to form the Rutherglen branch of the Communist Party. The branch was composed of two railwaymen, two miners, one engineer and the reporter of the local paper, the *Rutherglen Reformer*.

It caused great concern in the ILP branch. It meant that their young, active and conscientious members had left. Davie Hardie, who I continued to work with in the Socialist Sunday School and who eventually became Labour MP for Rutherglen, was sad about it but admitted that the ILP could not expect us to continue as members.

We got premises to meet in and held our first street corner meeting at East Mains Street. I chaired the meeting with Bill Joss our speaker from Glasgow. We started delivery of the *Workers' Weekly* and canvassed all over the town for readers.

I got to work in the Socialist Sunday School and was able to get a group to join the Young Comrades League (then the children's section of the YCL). Three of the young comrades and myself attended the National Conference of the Young Comrades League in Manchester where I met for the first time Davie Springhall, General Secretary of the YCL and also Lizzie Bain from Glasgow.

The Young Comrades League took up quite a bit of my time but soon the trade union branch and the activities of the local CP branch became priorities.

We were invited to attend regular Sunday meetings of the Glasgow members held in the Furnishing Trades Hall, Watson Street, Glasgow. It was there I met the leading CPers and was most interested in the discussions on political issues. Marx's *Das Kapital* and Labriola's *Essays on the Materialist Conception of History* were the two key books for study.

NUR Branch

I was also active in the NUR branch. No 10 branch was my father's branch, a signalman's branch. In it were two well-known figures in the Glasgow Labour Movement. Both of them my father respected because of their knowledge of Socialism, and the branch decided to have short talks and questions on different subjects in an effort to attract more young railwaymen to the branch meetings.

James Newman, a Glasgow Baillie, gave the first talk which really did not provide material for discussion. It was more information on what he was doing in the municipal chambers. I was taken aback by the lack of politics.

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At the next monthly meeting another member of the branch gave his talk, T. L. Smith, well known throughout Scotland as an IWW man, a disciple of Daniel De Leon. Tom got right on to his theme of "industrial unionism" and went to town attacking the political parties, Labour and Communist, as being superfluous and deceptive in the struggle to change society.

He had set a challenge and I rose to the occasion. While agreeing to the principle of industrial unionism, when it came to changing Capitalism to Socialism, what was wanted was all-round political struggle and that called for a revolutionary party such as the CPGB. Examples were the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, Cromwell's whole period and the American civil war.

What was his answer to this? Tom answered other points of view but did not attempt to answer mine.

When I got home my father was simply lyrical about the fact that his son had tripped up T. L. Smith. It was a turning-point in my father's political attitude. He had been what we called a "J. H. Thomas". Now he was seriously considering my political views. He started reading the *Workers' Weekly*, the *Sunday Worker* and was a reader of the *Daily Worker* until he died.

District Council

By this time I was elected to the Glasgow and West of Scotland District Council of the NUR. I was on the Rutherglen Trades Council and was elected chairman.

The NUR District Council had a strong group of CPers and members of the National Minority Movement. There were great comrades like Joe McMillan (the first CPer to be elected to the National EC of the NUR), Jimmie Muir, Jimmie Leslie, Jimmie Figgins and Charlie Irvine who were Minority Movement (Red International Labour Unions) members and all eventually joined the Party except Jimmy Figgins.

All were my senior in age and very strong characters. I learned much in the fight against the Right Wing control of the District Council. The policies of J. H. Thomas and C. T. Cramp were supported by the Right Wing, and bitter, even personal, became the discussions at every Council meeting.

General Strike

The first Labour Government had now come and gone. With the Baldwin Government in the saddle and the coalminers being bullied into accepting longer hours and lower wages, a crisis had arisen that affected all workers.

The work of our comrades on the District Council was strong and no opportunity was allowed to slip to expose the Samuel Commission on the coal industry and the preparations being made by the Baldwin government to set up the strike-breaking machinery of OMS (Organisation for Maintenance of Supplies).

When the TUC made its call for a general strike in support of the miners, it was in line with the widespread feelings of railwaymen.

The West of Scotland District Council of the NUR unanimously decided to reconstitute the DC as the West of Scotland NUR Central Strike Committee. The response of railwaymen was tremendous. I recollect feeling excited as the wheels stopped turning. All trains, goods, minerals, passengers, came suddenly to a halt.

I also felt for the first time that I had a serious responsibility to my workmates because I was on the NUR Central Strike Committee. Being nineteen years of age I suppose I was tremendously impressed by the solidarity that swept not only the railwaymen but the workers in one factory after another all over the city.

Compensated Men

My grandfather, an engine driver, had lost an eye by a flying bolt from the face plate of his engine and, like similar accident cases, were put to different work and we called them "compensated men".

Did the strike call mean they too had to come out? This I remember was what I raised for discussion in the NUR Central Strike Committee. The danger for the compensated men was that they might lose their compensation.

The decision was unanimous that they must come out. I was instructed to take the decision and the explanation to the compensated men. They responded to the call although a few of them were afraid and started to live in the premises of the railway company to avoid running the gauntlet of abuse from their workmates. Feeling ran high, and such compensated men as continued to work were branded as scabs.

Council of Action

It was marvellous how quickly workers, trade unionists and non-trade unionists alike, rallied to the local Council of Action (Rutherglen Trades Council).

Seeing how the NUR Central Strike Committee had set up headquarters, with members on duty 24 hours a day, a courier system of cyclists and motor cyclists, we took it up in Rutherglen. The local Council of Action established an HQ in the Rechabites Hall, a courier system, picketing organisation, propaganda by meetings daily, up-

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to-date information and eventually issued a typewritten Bulletin each day.

In Rutherglen only one railwayman remained at work. He was a yard foreman at Bridgeton Bank yard. To me it was a reflection on my responsibility as a railwayman and Central Strike Committee member that I could not report a 100 per cent stoppage.

So mass pickets were organised who waited for the "scab" making for home and escorted him through the town. Twice we did this. The result was that the yard foreman could not go to work again because of a nervous breakdown. Now I was able to report that the strike was 100 per cent in Rutherglen.

Creative Ability of the Masses

The local Council of Action headquarters was a beehive of strike activity. Day and night active work was being carried through by hundreds of workers.

The Co-op Society and the shopkeepers were volunteering support by donating food. Most of this was sent to the miners locally and in Lanarkshire.

The Rutherglen Council of Action set up daily communications with Cambuslang and Blantyre Councils of Actions on the one hand and with the big Glasgow Council of Action on the other. Solidarity among the mass of workers, their wives and the shopkeepers was reaching higher and higher levels. It was therefore easy to build strike organisations.

When recollecting this experience, I could never forget how true it was to talk about the creative ability of the masses. Action brought out the best in strikers. When the Strike Committee decided to do anything it was immediately carried out by all sorts of workers. You got the great impression that you were governing the locality.

Police

What made this clear was the part played by the police and the OMS strike breakers.

A solitary tram car driven by university students managed somehow to reach Rutherglen Main Street. It was protected by police. It got no further for it was surrounded by hundreds of workers, the trolley was taken off the overhead electric wire, the students were manhandled and the police beat a hasty retreat. That tram car stood immobilised for the rest of the strike.

Police forces, ordinary or special, tried to trap strikers and I remember putting the proposal to the Council of Action that we place strikers at different parts of the town, at factories, rail depots and at police stations, to check and inform on police movements: where the police were, how many, whether on horseback, or if any plain clothes men or informers entered the police stations.

One black incident was when demonstrating miners marched in from Lanarkshire to Glasgow. In Dalmarnock road they were attacked by hundreds of policemen, many on horseback, who had secreted themselves in the Ruby Street Tram Depot.

The battle that ensued cost life and cracked the skulls of many demonstrators. The horror of it caused a deep-seated hatred of the police and exposed it as a force in support of the government, the bosses and for the defeat of the workers.

Communists in Action

The local group of the Communist Party continued to snatch meetings of members when possible between duties. All our comrades were fully identified with the strike activity.

The group leader was arrested in Dalmarnock Road trying to stop a tram car driven by OMS students. When this took place I was elected to lead the group.

This created a problem at home. My father feared that I would be arrested or beaten up by the police. And there was always the possibility that troops would intervene. I was on the NUR strike committee and Chairman of the Council of Action, which my father fully agreed with. But to be leader of the local group of the Communist Party would finally mark me out for attention by the police.

It was a hectic time and I really cannot remember going to bed during the nine days the General Strike lasted.

I had joined the National Minority Movement sometime before the strike and now in the strike this was the important thing: to keep close contact with the MM in Glasgow. The centre from which the MM operated was old McGill's shop in Shuttle Street. It was there I met Peter Kerrigan for the first time along with Frank Stephenson (vehicle builders), Ralph Forrester (sheet metal workers), Tommie Sillars (engineers), Colin Wright (woodworkers).

We welcomed the publication of the *Scottish Worker* for it demonstrated the power of the working class which had deprived the government and employing classes of the ability to publish the capitalist newspapers.

The absence of newspapers did not prevent rumour spreading. The strike committees, councils of actions and the Communists had to nail the lies and false stories that were going the rounds. The radio, still in the hands of the government,

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never ceased to undermine the authority of the councils of action.

Troops had begun to be used in key establishments and everything was being done to divide and split the tremendous solidarity that continued to sweep the country. The enemy, the government, was alarmed and fearful of the mass determination of the working people.

The Great Betrayal

Then came the news that the General Council of the British TUC had gone cap in hand to the government. Was it a rumour?

We knew something was happening for we had received news in the NUR Central Strike Committee that the strike might be called off. 'Stand by for instructions' was the call. Then it came.

The General Strike was off, and each local union had to make its own arrangements appropriate to the termination of the strike. But on what basis was it called off? The mystery caused alarm, apprehension, yes impatience.

This deepened substantially when our union leadership called off the strike and then called it *on* again. It had now become clear that the national leadership, the British TUC and the union executives were not coming clean. This led to anger. Workers all over the place were taking decisions to carry on the strike irrespective of what was happening in London.

For nine days the power and might of a united working class prevailed throughout the country. Then came instructions from all unions to call off this might and return to work with our tail between our legs. The enormity of the treachery of the TU leaders in London was on the lips of every honest, hard-working man and woman.

The Council of Action tried to hold the front. But betrayal so outrageous took its toll of the courage and determination of the strikers. It is hard to describe the extent and depth of feeling of the workers at this tragic outcome.

For Right Wing reformism was the biggest danger that the Labour Movement had to face. I could say that the General Strike was a tremendous experience for me at the age of nineteen. But more than that it clinched my conviction of the need for a Party of Socialism, a revolutionary Party that leads and organises the overthrow of the capitalist system—that kind of Party could only be the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Discussion Contributions on:

Social Crisis: Pornography and the Law

Steven Sedley and Tony Agathangelou

(*Steven Sedley is a Barrister, who has published a collection of Folk Songs* ("*The Seeds of Love*", 1967) *and done fieldwork in collecting folk music.*
Tony Agathangelou is a Social Psychologist currently engaged in fulltime research on some social-psychological and sociological aspects of the use of psychoactive substances in a "sub-cultural" setting.
Both are members of the Cultural Committee of the Communist Party.)

The haste with which 19th-century capitalism required the pulling up of rural roots and the assembling of a dispossessed urban workforce damaged more than the individuals and communities which were directly affected. It put an end to the relatively continuous and ordered social relations of rural society, whose members commonly saw those relations as an extension of the laws of nature and found in them both personal identification and social norms. Christianity, with its "universal" moral teachings, had endorsed those relations and required the individual to observe a moral code of personal responsibility to the community for his conduct.

The transition from pre-industrial communities to industrial workshops and slums, revealing major class antagonisms, laid the basis of an increasingly autonomous secular way of life. In such circumstances the moral dictates of the ruling class are much more easily seen to represent the values of that

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class rather than those of any true community to which the individual belongs.

> "Insofar as the norms which do govern the new standard economic, political and social relations between classes are given a religious significance, what happens is that religion is invoked to justify the norms which one class wishes and is able to use against another. . . . The officially endorsed norms so clearly are of utility only to certain partial and partisan human interests that it is impossible to clothe them with universal and cosmic significance".[1]

This is not to say that religious morality is excluded from the life of the working class. On the contrary, the history of the last two hundred years shows extraordinary persistance and flexibility on the part of organised religion in struggling to preserve and extend its hold on the minds of working people. In a variety of ways, too, its moral tenets have been pressed into popular consciousness. Some, of course, are sound tenets of loyalty and common decency which have been cornerstones of the labour movement. Others are reactionary prejudices which reflect the desire of the ruling class to control by fear what it cannot control by force. Their penetration into every part of the population is one of the most enduring effects of religious morality in a secular society, and we will discuss later on how the role of juries in cases of public and private morality is built on this foundation.

The Secular Trend

Two main factors continue today to feed the secular trend. One is the persistent disruption and enforced mobility demanded by the unrepresentative and faceless class which administers monopoly capitalism. The clashes which ensue continually expose, for those involved, the emptiness of our professed social norms and moral unity. For some, the response is withdrawal or anti-social activity. Others learn political lessons. Nobody finds his faith in the system and its moral posturings confirmed.

The other factor is bourgeois individualism itself, which is showing an increasing tendency to bite the hand that has always fed it. The upper classes have always taken it as their right to ignore the moral code which they urge upon their social inferiors, but they tended formerly to do so quietly and hypocritically. The present generation of the middle class has set about developing an individualistic and anti-authoritarian ethic which is often enough apolitical (and so unattractive on its face to the labour movement) but which nevertheless is causing the authorities a great deal of alarm. Where attempts are made to work with and learn from the organised working class—among students for example—the fears of the authorities start to be justified.

It is not therefore without importance that the brunt of the attack on those who are thought to threaten public and private morals has been borne so far by young members of the middle-class, often with immature and anarchistic political notions, with whom class-conscious workers find it hard to sympathise. We would argue that the attack on such people is part of a wider and deeper assault by the ruling class on every form of dissent, and that it therefore contains serious warnings for the whole labour movement. We would also argue that the formulation of an alternative and better morality is a task which increasingly confronts our movement, and that there is first a demolition job to be done on the jerry-built edifice of morality in which we have all grown up. To the limited extent that the "underground" press points up the growing gap between professed social and moral values and the realities of life under capitalism, it is political, and is recognised as such by the authorities.

Bourgeois Moral Assumptions

The counter-attacks by the paternalistic disciples of organised church and disorganised religion reveal their fundamental *political* interest in the maintenance of economic and social relations detrimental to the working class. Thus Peter Grosvenor, in the Longford Report, directly identifies "pornography" as being potentially destructive of the existing political system. Paternalistic religious appeals, across classes, to reinforce social and moral values which serve the ruling class interest become increasingly outmoded. Such paternalism cannot hold sway where confidence in the advantages of mutual assistance and class solidarity in action has been developed; but it would be a mistake to underestimate the depth to which bourgeois moral assumptions and attitudes have penetrated even the politically advanced sections of the labour movement. Some of the letters from readers which were printed in the *Morning Star* in the wake of the *OZ* trial demonstrate this very plainly. They began from an assumption that *OZ* was simply filth and that the *Star* should have no truck with it.

Class conflict reinforces the insight that choices cannot be in the interest of all classes, but rather that they exemplify the differences in class interest and the corresponding differences in the forms of class struggle; and that different classes may have different moral attitudes, values and moral lives. The individual may even believe (somewhat misguidedly) during this period of relative secular liberty, that moral values are personal, allowing him individual interpretation and free choice. Bourgeois

[1] Alisdair MacIntyre: *Secularisation and Moral Change*, 1967.

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individualism tells him so. Increasing consciousness of his class interests demonstrates the invalidity of this belief.

Moral choice cannot now be formulated for him in an imperative form by sources of "authority" except where these emanate from a group in which the individual finds class reference. A case where moral imperatives concerning personal conduct (in particular excessive drinking and violence) were accepted as legitimate and binding is found in the rules laid down by the militant UCS Shop Stewards Liaison Committee; that is, by those of their own class whom the shipyard workers trusted to advance their claims for the right to work. Prior and democratically agreed standards of solidarity and collective activity provided the basis for adherence to such moral guidelines. Class struggle determined the content of these rules; at particular stages of the confrontation they were relevant, but they were not intended to carry any universal moral law. The foundations of an alternative socialist morality are thus laid in concrete class struggles; the socialist principles of class solidarity and collective discipline have concrete meanings only in class struggle and do not exist as a set of moral abstractions.

A Class-based Strategy

Our emphasis on the history of the secularisation of present day beliefs and values—which we believe underlies contemporary trends in personal freedom of choice expressed at many levels of cultural life—is intended to demonstrate that the current attacks on personal liberties and, in particular, changing sexual mores are essentially aspects of a class-based strategy aimed principally at arresting the rate of secularisation, disenchantment and disaffection. It is clear from the Longford Report that changes in certain social institutions, in particular, the social reforms concerning abortion, contraception and homosexuality, along with parallel developments in increased sexual licence and the partial liberation of female consciousness have implications for the family and the church in the first instance, and in the next instance for the very fabric of bourgeois society. The focus on "pornography" is in large part a political attack on those complex expressions of personal freedom which are easily defended where the battle against the Christian moral underpinnings of bourgeois ideology is still in its foraging stage.

These initial expressions of new-found freedom from Christian orthodoxy and moral prescription are limited in expression and partly illusory. They may, indeed, contain certain of those principles upon which capitalist society itself is based, for instance its phoney individualism and its exploitative relations. Thus in much literature and other material termed "pornographic" there can be no denying that the sexual relations portrayed to stimulate sexual fantasy and desire are mainly exploitative of the female, or the young, by the adult male. Characteristically, this sort of "hard porn" notoriously escapes prosecution—all but a handful of cases.

Guilt and Private Morality

This may be expected where the monopolistic economic and social relations and the state apparatus evolved to maintain them still constrain public expressions of personal freedom and thereby man's psycho-biological-social growth. Through the medium of "guilt" private morality too is controlled. The social relations which maintain the division of labour and the often demeaning nature of daily routine frequently prevent man understanding his abilities and potentialities except in distorted forms. The authority-based class relationship is dominant where exploitation and property ownership are dominant values. It is not surprising that these relations find expression in his other social and, in this instance, sexual relations, whether in reality or in fantasy. Genuine sexual liberation cannot be found in material which reproduces the exploitative relations found in capitalist society.

For the maintenance of bourgeois society, sex is necessarily confined to the social institution of marriage, with minor deviations such as clandestine prostitution and mild sexual titillation allowed. Even major deviations such as homosexual practice may be allowed (if the "lobby" is numerous and politically influential enough); it can be rationalised away as being primarily a biological necessity rather than a reflection of diversity in sexual-social mores. Its toleration is rarely based on humanity alone.

The liberation of women within and from the institution of marriage where women are objects, property and tied to the economic conditions under which the husband is himself exploited, requires support from a consciousness on the part of the working-class male of woman's right in the class struggle to play an equal role. Whenever she is depicted as a demeaned sexual object, her potential to play such a part is undermined.

Further, the relatively "closed" conditions of the family culture are ideal for the inculcation of bourgeois values via the parents to the young, isolated from the direct conflict of alternative value systems. For this reason, any attempt to introduce youth to an alternative value system, not based on the authority of the family as a bourgeois institution, is classified both as "pornographic" and as insurrectionist (see the trials and debates concerning the *Little Red Schoolbook* and the *OZ* publication for "schoolkids").

Sexual Assumptions

There is no retreat from the social changes in personal licence that have occurred, although, as is

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here suggested, the advances may be limited by many bourgeois values which have long been rejected by "progressives". Nevertheless, to support any hostile legislation in this area would be to ignore the fact that the portrayal of certain sexual themes now evidenced in much literature and theatre may represent a direct attack on the deadening and mechanical commercialised representation of sexual relations which has pervaded daily life, by the challenging of those sexual assumptions which have for too long been taken as givens and immutables. Much "underground" drama and literature seeks to take sex out of the world of drink advertisements and fast cars and re-establish it as an unvarnished activity (as opposed to a spectator sport) in a familiar and often zany context. In this context sexual relations may legitimately become the main focus of debate, with all the implications this has for the questioning of the continued validity of traditional roles.

The legal and moral campaign to turn back the clock to an era when apparent unity of communal interest provided the basis of a moral framework must not be ignored or underestimated. The ruling class representatives, its bishops, judges, lay churchman and self-appointed guardians of the collective moral good may, at times, cut humorous or ludicrous figures of outmoded morality. Yet the "unofficial" support and attention which other representatives of state institutions afforded the Longford entourage offers an object lesson in the flexibility of ruling class politics. Their collective appeals to repair and extend the decaying morality of the bourgeois class to ensure stability and unity and to temper conflict become increasingly strident in their attempts to censor and restrain the limited individual freedoms being exercised. Their test-cases may be tactically misguided (as for instance with the Warhol film), but the overall pressure is changing the climate of experimentation and exploration according to prior considerations of what is acceptable.

Class Assault on Unorthodoxy

Extensive state interference in sexual morality is a common symptom of political crisis; Nazi Germany and South Africa come readily to mind. In England one has the comparison between Star Chamber and the period of the English Revolution: the latter was the only phase of our modern history when no court held jurisdiction over public morals—and one of the first acts of the courts after 1660 was to resume such jurisdiction. Equally the confident abandonment of legal restraints on moral behaviour seems to have accompanied at least the heady early phase of the Russian Revolution.

What we are witnessing in Britain today, we suggest, is a class-based assault on unorthodoxy in sexual morality. Such an assault necessarily finds its sanctions in the law, and it is therefore instructive to look in a little detail at the sinister pattern emerging from the succession of recent cases on obscenity.

The passing of the Obscene Publications Act, 1959 was optimistically welcomed in literary and legal circles as a breakthrough to sanity. It defined an article as obscene, it is true, "if its effect . . . is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely . . . to read, see or hear . . . it"—a phrase largely borrowed from the garbled extempore definition laid down in 1868 by Chief Justice Cockburn in *R. v. Hicklin*, and used for decades as the law's only yardstick of permissiveness. The Act contained provisions for the police to have simple porn traders dealt with summarily by magistrates, but also provided for trials by jury and for a defence that an article, though obscene, was for the public good. The power of the police to keep serious books out of the hands of juries has been abused, notably in the prosecution of *Cain's Book*; but by and large the important cases have been brought before juries for trial. Moreover, the 1959 Act expressly provided that:

> "A person publishing an article shall not be proceeded against for an offence at common law consisting of the publication of any matter contained or embodied in the article where it is of the essence of the offence that the matter is obscene".

However, the expectation that with a straightforward Act on the Statute Book the common law[2] would now leave public morality alone and find something else to interfere with proved ill-founded. Within a year a man named Shaw was prosecuted for publishing a handbook of prostitutes called *The Ladies' Directory*. He was not charged under the new Act but with an obscure common law offence, conspiracy to corrupt public morals. On appeal, the House of Lords by a majority of 4 to 1 decided that the offence existed. Lord Reid dissented. He held that the other four Law Lords were inventing a new offence, and that only Parliament could do that. He held in passing, however, that there did exist an offence of outraging public decency.

"Conspiracy"

A decade later the *IT* case reached the House of Lords, Lord Reid this time held that there *was* such an offence as conspiracy to corrupt public morals but *not* such an offence as conspiracy to outrage public decency. On the latter point one Law Lord agreed with him and three disagreed.

[2] Common law: the body of judge-made law built up over the centuries, as against the statute law laid down from time to time by Parliament.

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The only voice which spoke out solidly against the whole use of conspiracy as a longstop where no substantive charge could be found by the authorities was Lord Diplock, who in a brilliant speech showed how the law of conspiracy was developed by Star Chamber and fed by judicial hostility to early trade unions, and pointed out:

> "The vice of Shaw's case was that it opened a wide field of uncertainty as to what other conduct was also criminal".

With the recent decision of the Court of Appeal that conspiracy to trespass (trespass being only a civil wrong and not a crime) is a crime, the warning is proving well founded. It points to a fundamental trend in police and judicial policy which has made considerable headway since 1960 and shows no sign of slackening: the use of legal sophistry to make a crime of an agreement between two or more people to do an act which is not itself criminal but which judges disapprove of. Thus the Court of Appeal in the recent conspiracy to trespass case went out of its way to suggest:

> "Perhaps as a matter of practice prosecutions should not be brought unless a combination of persons to trespass is likely to cause a breach of the peace or to affect the public interest in some other way or to be an outrageous interference with the rights of others".

The breadth and implications of this "guidance" to the authorities are frightening. The "public interest" of course means anything which strikes the judges as desirable. In 1824 Mr. Justice Burrough said of it:

> "public policy . . . is a very unruly horse, and when once you get astride it you never know where it will carry you. . . . It is never argued at all but when other points fail".

"An outrageous interference with the rights of others" is almost the same phrase as the prosecution used in its recent unsuccessful attempt to get Dennis Brutus convicted under the Public Order Act 1936 for making an anti-apartheid protest at Wimbledon, and as Francis Bennion used in his partly successful prosecution of Peter Hain over the *Stop the 70 Tour* campaign.

Thus the use by the judges of a sweeping offence of conspiracy to outflank and supplement laws laid down by Parliament has characterised far wider fields of law than the law of obscenity in recent years, and represents a continuation of the kind of judicial reaction which has been familiar to the people of this country for centuries. The volte-face performed by Lord Reid, ordinarily one of the sanest and shrewdest of the Law Lords, between Shaw's case and the *IT* case is perhaps the clearest single barometer of the change in the judicial climate in the last decade. There is no doubt that the judges are increasingly taking it upon themselves to regulate public order and public morals through the criminal law as they see fit, and in response to the social pressures which they sense.

Longford Report

In this context the importance of the tendentious and unscientific Longford Report on pornography is that it crystallises a great deal of the uninformed prejudice and a great many of the objectives of the purity battalion of the law and order brigade. In addition to such experts as Jimmy Saville, the committee did contain four senior lawyers, one of them a judge of the Court of Appeal. It is therefore interesting to see what new laws it proposed. What the report advocated was two new laws, one to ban the public display of "any written, pictorial or other material which is held to be *indecent*", the other to ban the production or sale of "any article which *outraged contemporary standards of decency* or humanity which are accepted by the public at large". At first sight it is impossible to see how any lawyer could put his name to the creation of offences so vague and arbitrary. Yet a more careful look at the leading cases of obscenity and indecency decided since 1959 will show that in fact this formulation in the Longford report reflects the state to which the judges have already succeeded in pushing the law.

The most important point about the 1959 Act was that it purported to lay down an objective test. A jury had to be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the article in question would tend to deprave and corrupt its readers. The point is that if a judge simply invited the jurors to decide whether they found the article disgusting, as Judge Argyle did in the *OZ* case, any conviction under the 1959 Act had to be squashed on appeal because it had been based on a purely subjective test. The old common law, though it had used the same phrase, had in fact allowed juries to interpret it purely according to their own preconceived ideas. Thus Chief Justice Cockburn told the jury in 1868:

> "It would suggest . . . thoughts of a most impure and libidinous character".

But the same court as quashed the convictions in the *OZ* case under the 1959 Act went on to hold that the offence under the Post Office Act 1953 of sending obscene material through the post involved no such objective test. It was enough if the jury found the article "repulsive, filthy, loathsome or lewd".

The offence of conspiracy to outrage public decency, which the Law Lords by a bare majority held to exist in the *IT* case, was held to apply to

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anything which the jury found "lewd, disgusting and offensive". In Shaw's case the corrupting of public morals was held to mean simply "to lead astray morally", and beyond that point to be wholly a matter for the jury. And in case anyone thought that at least the use of the word "public" in these conspiracy charges set the standard of proof pretty high, Lord Reid in the *IT* case took the trouble to say this:

> ". . . conspiracy to corrupt public morals is something of a misnomer. It really means to corrupt the morals of such members of the public as may be influenced by the matter published by the accused".

so we are back again with Chief Justice Cockburn's hypothesis of "those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall".

Public Morality and the Courts

In support of this campaign to put the control of public morals firmly in the hands of the courts, the judges have had to rely on their juries. In the ordinary way the authorities have little regard for juries. In the three centuries that have gone by since the bourgeoisie first found it expedient to have 12 of its own people standing between the accused and a reactionary judiciary administering feudal laws, juries have come to be regarded by the authorities as for the most part an obstacle to the conviction of the guilty. Hence the recent introduction of majority verdicts, for example, which tend to secure more convictions than acquittals. Hence the virtual abolition of juries in civil claims for damages for personal injuries. Hence, too, the growing inclination of prosecutors to challenge jurors who look as if they may be sympathetic to the defence. But in matters of sexual morality the judiciary has always known that it can trust its juries.

> "It is said that there is a measure of vagueness in a charge of conspiracy to corrupt public morals, and also that there might be peril of the launching of prosecutions in order to supress unpopular or unorthodox views. My Lords, I entertain no anxiety on these lines. Even if accepted public standards may to some extent vary from generation to generation, current standards are in the keeping of juries, who can be trusted to maintain the corporate good sense of the community and to discern attacks upon values that must be preserved" (Lord Morris, in Shaw's case).

Other judges have since endorsed these words of praise which are probably without parallel in any other branch of the law.

This confidence has been reflected in the development of a judicial doctrine that the question whether an article is lewd, disgusting, or any of those other wholly subjective things is a matter entirely for the jury, as is equally the question whether (under the 1959 Act) an article tends to corrupt and deprave: so that no evidence, expert or otherwise, may now be called to persuade a jury that nobody could actually be corrupted or depraved by seeing the article in question, nor to express any view as to whether any of the common law's battery of opprobrious adjectives truly applies to the article.

Only two ways remain of introducing expert evidence in an obscenity case. The 1959 Act expressly declares that such evidence is admissible to support the defence that the publication of the article is for the public good. However it presupposes that the article has been found to be obscene, and the evidence is strictly confined to "the literary, artistic, scientific or other merits" of the article: what actually constitutes the public good remains locked in the jurors' heads. The other class of case where expert evidence is now allowed is where the publication concerned was aimed at children. This has happened by a sidewind. In 1968 some chewing gum manufacturers were prosecuted before magistrates for issuing obscene picture cards with their gum. The magistrates refused to hear the expert evidence for the prosecution and threw the case out. The High Court ordered them to hear the expert evidence on the likely effect of the cards on children before deciding the case. It was this precedent which enabled a great deal of expert evidence to be called in, for example, the *Little Red Schoolbook* case as well as in the *OZ* case (though in both cases unsuccessfully).

Role of Juries

The trust of the judiciary in juries in cases of morals has proved well founded. Since the 1959 Act was passed there has only been one significant acquittal by a jury in an obscenity case—that of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, where the prosecution was unusually inept and the defence impressive. *Last Exit to Brooklyn* and *OZ* only escaped on appeal because of serious deficiencies in the judges' summing-up to the juries.

The only moral issue which has recently set the judges at sixes and sevens is the solemn question whether the pit of depravity is bottomless or finite. The case of *DPP v. Whyte* this year proceeded from a magistrates' court, which held that the patrons of the defendants' bookshop were such dirty old men that they could be depraved and corrupted no further, to the High Court, which upheld the decision by 2 judges to 1; and from there to the House of Lords which overturned the High Court by 3 Law Lords to 2. The serious element to emerge from the majority judgments in the House of Lords is an explicit doctrine that corruption and depravity have nothing to do with a tendency to produce certain

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forms of behaviour: according to Lord Pearson the phrase refers

> "to the effect of an article on the minds (including the emotions) of the persons who read or see it",

and according to Lord Cross:

> "Depravity and corruption are conditions of the mind. . . ."

These primitive and moralistic views are not just expressions of opinion. Because of their origin they now form part of the law of the land, and in future obscenity trials judges will be required to direct juries accordingly.

With Whyte's case the wheel has turned full circle. Lord Wilberforce, who gave the leading judgment, arrived at his conclusion that Cockburn's test of "influence on the mind" is still the test for juries to apply by means of a convincing attack on the vagueness of the 1959 Act:

> "No definition of 'deprave and corrupt' is offered —no guideline as to what influence is meant. Is it criminal conduct, general or sexual, that is feared . . . or departure from some code of morality, sexual or otherwise, and if so, whose code, or from accepted or other beliefs, or the arousing of erotic desires 'normal' or 'abnormal', or . . . 'fantasies in the mind'. Some, perhaps most, of these alternatives involve deep questions of psychology and ethics: how are the courts to deal with them? Well might they have said that such words provide a formula that cannot in practice be applied. What they have said is, first, that no definition of deprave and corrupt can be provided . . . though the words are meant to be strong and emphatic . . . ; secondly, that judges and juries must decide for or against a tendency to deprave and corrupt as a question of fact and must do so without expert, that is, psychological or sociological or medical, advice. . . . I have serious doubts whether the Act will continue to be workable in this way, or whether it will produce tolerable results".

From this area of doubt, as much the work of the judges as of Parliament, their Lordships with breathtaking arrogance took the opportunity to drag the law back to what it had been before the 1959 Act was passed. They held that the test laid down by Chief Justice Cockburn in *R. v. Hicklin* was still the law because, in effect, the 1959 Act used Cockburn's key phrase and gave so little guidance on what it was supposed to mean that the courts were now justified in holding that it had the meaning Cockburn gave it: "thoughts of a most impure and libidinous character". The law has now reached the level of a certain QC who was sometimes asked by the Director of Public Prosecutions to advise whether a particular book or magazine should be prosecuted. Someone asked him how he decided. "Oh", said the QC, "I don't know anything about literature. I just read whatever I am asked to, and if I get an erection we prosecute". It is barely a parody of the present state of the law to say that juries might as well be directed in the same terms.

Watchdog for the Establishment

What then is the present state of the law of obscenity? First, it is apparent on reflection that the 1959 Act changed very little. On the express recommendation of the Select Committee on Obscene Publications, which proposed the Act, it adopted Chief Justice Cockburn's rhetorical phrase "deprave and corrupt"—a pair of words which were held in the *IT* case to mean the same thing—and thereby adopted the assumption that there is an ascertainable sequence of cause and effect, capable of being proved beyond reasonable doubt to a jury, by which a publication can adversely affect its readers' morals or moral wellbeing.

Next, the Act, or rather the judges who interpret it, holds that no scientific or expert proof of the tendency to deprave and corrupt is normally needed. The article in each case (childrens' publications excepted) must speak for itself to jurors who sit, not as experts, but as "the custodians of the standards for the time being" (*R. v. Stamford*). Thus, in every case, the judgment is to be a moral one: the judges have emptied the notion of "corrupting and depraving" of any factual content it might have.

Finally, it is now laid down as a binding proposition of law that corruption and depravity are a way of describing effects on the mind and emotions, and have nothing necessarily to do with behaviour.

It is worth observing that the common law has thus already passed the target of legal repression set by the Longford report. The judges have also announced (in the *OZ* appeal) that from now on there will be many obscenity cases justifying substantial terms of imprisonment.

When the judges, echoing the Whitehouse and Longford brigade, point to "public disapproval" as the warning of a threat to the existence of "society", one begins to see how in a real sense this shrill movement is a watchdog for the establishment. Democrats who ignore its antics should not be surprised at the appearance of new legislation or case-law which only at the most obvious level is concerned with restricting individual access to "indecent" material.

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Marxism and the Family

Maria Loftus

Up to the present moment Marxist theory has failed to cover adequately either the family and its function in modern capitalist society or the oppression of women, both of which need to be seen as dialectically related. The emergence of an autonomous Women's Liberation Movement has been the stimulus for questioning and challenging the existing Marxist theory, or absence of it. Family study and other theoretical groups in Women's Liberation, using the principles of historical materialism, have beem almost alone in creatively developing analysis of these vital areas of our social and economic existence. We have yet to have an analysis developed by Marxists in our own ranks which rivals those of Juliet Mitchell (*Woman's Estate*), and Margaret Benston (*Political Economy of Women's Liberation*), limited in some aspects as these are. This would be an appropriate time for us to acknowledge the pioneering role the Women's Liberation Movement has played in this relatively unexplored territory.

When analysing the family it is essential to see it as a very complex institution, the result of the interplay of economic, superstructural, and ideological forces in our present mode of production. However, Rosemary Small's article appeared to be marked by a tendency to separate the economic aspect of existence from social institutions and ideologies. She has grossly underestimated the family as an institutional site for particular forms of social consciousness, an institution which is itself (partially) determined and cemented by ideological pressures. This is not to say, however, that in the last analysis the family is not an effect of the economic structure of present day capitalist society.

Family as an Economic Unity

Whilst she vigorously defends the maintenance and protection of the individual family as opposed to the family as an economic unit (in Engel's terminology) she does not analyse the meaning of this crucial phrase (namely, "the family as the economic unit of society") and this seems to be a crucial omission.

Following from Marx's position outlined in the *Preface* to the *Critique of Political Economy*, the social formation must be analysed in terms of the economic base and the judicial and political and ideological superstructures. Our analysis of the family in any particular mode of production must proceed in terms of these levels of the social formation. How then is the family related to the functioning of capitalism?

A rigid division of labour exists between that done in the production unit, e.g., factory by wage earners, and that done in the unit of consumption, the family household; this latter is not wage labour. A fundamental point made in *Capital* (chapter 1), is that the value of labour power is determined not only by the labour time necessary to maintain the individual adult labourer but also that necessary to maintain his family. The family therefore is clearly identified as the unit responsible for the reproduction of the potential labour force. Not only does the worker and his family's physical needs have to be provided for, but part of the subsistence required is that necessary to renew his mental energies. Physical, social, and mental needs are not fixed, but change according to increases in general development, and the needs of a worker in an advanced capitalist economy are of a more subtle, complex nature than Marx described, and it thus appears to me that the home has become very much a site of leisure.

The woman in the home could be said to have a specific relation to the mode of production. Though many do work outside (predominantly in the service industries), their primary economic function is responsible for the reproduction and servicing of the labour force. They are isolated in the home with

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work based on semi-mechanised hand work. What is produced in the home falls into the category of something useful, i.e., use value, but is not a commodity because it is consumed in the place of production, and is not exchanged on the market. For this reason housework has been defined as being in a pre-capitalist mode, e.g., Margaret Benston compares housewives to serfs in feudal society, and Engels (*The Family, Private Property, and the State*), says that "the modern individual family is based on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife".

Marx shows in *Capital* how slavery can exist in a society otherwise characterised by wage labour, but the housewife unlike the former colonies of slaves or the agricultural worker in early capitalist society is not outside of productive relations but intrinsically enmeshed in them. The subjugation of people as slaves or serfs requires as a necessary condition their acquiescence in it because they see their condition as a natural state of affairs and part and parcel of membership of a "group" they belong to. It is here that the necessity for ideology becomes apparent and I shall develop this point later.

Unit of Consumption

The Family has another important function in advanced capitalist society for it is also a unit of consumption. Developments in the last century have brought about a drastic reduction of the use values actually produced in the home by women. Vast amounts of labour time were expended in the production of these domestic products which have now been brought into the social sphere of production. Accompanying this has been improvements in household technology. Those are significant developments and must be seen in relation to the drawing into the work place of increasing numbers of married women.

Rosemary Small mentions this latter point but I am critical of her analysis. Is it a result of the improvements in the status of women and a consequence of the fight for women's equality as she claims? Or should it not be analysed in terms of the necessity for capitalist production to have huge sources of cheap labour constantly at its disposal? In contrast to the middle of the last century when the extreme exploitation of women as cheap labour was producing dire consequences, conditions now exist for their use as a cheap labour force without jeopardising the vital reproductive and servicing functions they perform in the home, or undermining the relations of male dominance and female dependence. (See: *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution* by Ivy Pinchbeck and *Victorian Working Woman* by Wanda Neff.) The number of married women working goes on increasing but as the Manpower Research Unit surveys over the last ten years, clearly show, the proportion of them in skilled production, technical, supervisory, and managerial work is decreasing. There is not a wide range of job opportunities available for them and we can note a tendency for their increasing expulsion from the skilled production force.

The married women being drawn into the work force are concentrated predominantly in the growing service sector (2/3 of all women workers)[1] performing catering, domestic, child care, and other services which reflect the work they do in the home. (They could in fact be seen to be performing a similar function to that of female private domestic servants during the last century who were not included in statistics). We should not underestimate the significance of this labour which is essential for capitalism. The drawing of women out of their homes into the work force would seem to indicate contradictions occuring in the economic base undermining certain social structures.

The Family and Ideology

Alongside an examination of the relationship to the economic base a comprehensive analysis of the family must show how it functions as part of the superstructure and ideology. An important function is that it is the site where class status is transmitted (the wife is defined in terms of her husband's class). Family structures for the upper class serve a different function in that they ensure that the means of production stays in the hands of one class; this is in turn reinforced by the legal system. Bearing in mind that superstructure and ideology control the relations of authority and their effect on the formation of organisations, I would find Rosemary Small's assertion that changes in the family have created a more equal relationship between parents and children contentious.

Legally children are regarded as the property of their parents. I think it is idealistic to suggest the notion of equality in a relationship where children are seen to be the possessions of their parents. Despite good intentions on the part of the latter, the child's total dependence on parents gives them much potential power and their authority is often wielded after the time when the child is physically dependent. The socialisation of children in the home could be seen to be related to their future work relations. For in complying with the wishes of parents, children learn the relations of submission and dominance upon which the later work relations will thrive.

It is significant that no Marxist since Engels has attempted to analyse how the development of

[1] Office of Manpower Economics Report on Equal Pay, *H.M.S.O.*, 1972.

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sexuality in males and females is controlled by social rules geared into the mode of production.

Control of Sexuality

A necessity emerges for those who own the means of production to control the producers of people such that their sexual relations reproduce the social relations that sanction their dominant position. As the family is the site for the reproduction of labour power it is necessary that families in their turn be produced and also that female sexuality be defined in a certain restricted way to facilitate this. Institutions such as the church and the school engender the need for security to be discovered in a heterosexual relationship with one other person at a time. Marriage, a vital ingredient of the family, is the normal site for sexual relations. To take the point made by Irene Brennan, it seems intrinsically a socially engendered contract of sexual property supported by the legal system. (Within the legal code, marriage, in order to be valid, has to be consummated, no assault within marriage can be regarded as rape and the traditional grounds for divorce are sexual infidelity.) Developing contradictions are blurring the role of this institution however.

Though it is necessary for women's sexual activity to be controlled, a similar inhibition on men is not vital. In ideology we find female sexuality defined as being qualitatively different from that of the male, i.e., passive. To maintain the production of the labour force, woman's sexuality is defined in terms of her future capacity for motherhood and men's pleasure. The production of children does not necessarily require either that she initiate sexual activity or has pleasure or satisfaction in copulation. Hence an important aspect of the Women's Liberation Movement has been to challenge, and attempt to redefine the existing concept of women's sexuality. A very significant aspect of control over women is the denial of the means whereby they might control their bodies although, as Rosemary Small mentions, this is now technically possible. The taboo on prostitution must also be seen in relation to these definitions of sexuality which have allowed promiscuity and less tightly controlled sexual behaviour to men. Prostitution is a channel for the extra-marital activity of men and therefore a safety valve, but the prostitute herself is socially ostracised. Seen objectively, the reason for this emerges. The prostitute by selling her sexual services is more economically independent than the woman who gives hers in exchange for security (marriage). The wife ends up economically, psychologically, and socially dependent on her husband.

Gender Roles

A vital factor to maintain the situation in which the servicing and reproduction of a predominantly male workforce is done by the female is the acquisition by young children of gender roles. Again this process begins in the family and is reinforced from the outside, particularly the school. A young female child will be conditioned to think she will find her future fulfilment not in work, which will be seen as a stop-gap, but in bearing and rearing children and caring for a husband. However, motherhood and the inevitable task of child rearing necessitates loss of the women's identity and subjugation to the needs of a husband and children.

Most women do work for a significant proportion of their lives and yet because they are not defined as workers but in terms of the sort of work they do in the home they can easily be exploited. The trade union movement has a long history of excluding women from its ranks, partly based on the suspicion of those women who, because of their position in the family, can be easily manipulated into undermining rates of pay and acting as blacklegs.

The hegemony of the ruling class ideology, as I have attempted to show, is maintained in our present society in subtle forms. It glorifies woman's biological endowment but at the same time uses this as a basis to define her social fulfilment in terms of the "satisfaction" of housework and child rearing. Thus her position in the family confirms her social inferiority. Male supremacist tendencies are encouraged because social relations are clearly based on those of male dominance and female dependence. Men have a privileged position vis-a-vis the woman. Engels pointed this out when he said, "within the family, 'he' is the bourgeois and the wife represents the proletariat."

Because bourgeois ideology permeates society at all levels, the working class and other sections involved in the struggle for socialism must inevitably fall victim to it as long as a false dichotomy exists between the personal sphere of our lives (family, marriage, interpersonal relationships), and economic oppression in the work and general spheres.

Family in Socialist Society

Within socialist countries today we can still see hangovers of class society in the form of traditional attitudes to women and the survival of the bourgeois institution—the family. In these countries, as well as in those under advanced capitalist rule, there exists a contradiction between the social nature of production relations and the privatisation of housework and socialisation of the next generation. Even under socialism, women have not been emancipated from the sole responsibility for these tasks.

It is vital that under a socialist system these areas be brought into the sphere of social production. The lessons of these countries and the Kibbutz system must surely point to the conclusion that women's

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oppression will continue to exist if it is still "they" who predominantly perform these functions when they do become socialised. A prime necessity is for men to be introduced into these spheres of work on a much larger scale. This will require a fundamental change in the social conditioning of children. It seems that in order to achieve equality in our present society women have to "ape" men, to take over the characteristics we associate with them, the limitations of this is that it is only a one way process.

Rosemary Small suggests that in order to formulate blueprints for the family we should be looking at the features of the socialist society we expect to build. The existing ideology maintains that the family provides warm, loving, secure relationships etc. In fact it tends to produce people suited to capitalist relations of production, people who are insular and cannot transcend narrow family ties and who display distrust, unconcern, and indifference to others outside, particularly the casualities. Even more important is the vast section of the population it excludes. Far from encouraging solidarity which is necessary for combination and comradeship in struggle it would seem to encourage divisions, which invariably serve the maintenance of class rule. To transcend this under socialism the family would have to change in such a fundamental way that it would no longer be recognised as "the family".

Jean Feldmar

In discussing the family I think it is necessary to try to define more precisely what we mean when we state that the family is an economic unit of capitalism; to consider its economic function, and the relation between this function and the conflict and stress which is observable in families.

According to the economic "laws" of capitalism, wages have to be sufficient to maintain the worker (male in this context) in a fit state to work, and to replace himself by children who are fit enough to work profitably. It follows that he is expected to "keep" a wife to look after him and bring up his children. The "superfluous" women, single women and any who can find time to work, are of interest to capitalist society only as cheap labour, when required. In practice, in addition to this basic function, the family is also expected to carry the whole burden of all who are unable to work, the old and disabled as well as the children.

In a century or more of prolonged political struggle some important advances have been achieved (e.g. free education, pensions, sick benefit). These have lightened the burden, but, while capitalism survives, such relief will always be grudgingly conceded. In a society motivated by private profit the welfare of the non-producers must rate lowest in priority. So the battle continues, not just for reforms, but for radical change in the social structure.

Reforms Opposed

Every reform has been bitterly opposed, and the opposition has made extensive use of reactionary ideology to reinforce its refusal to act. In reference to the family the idea of "duty" is heavily emphasised. Parents have a duty to look after their children and women who wish for something else in life than domestic duties are branded as neglectful. Children have a duty to care for their aged parents (until after World War II a legal liability to maintain them financially). Inevitably, women have carried most of the burden, whether married or single, for it has traditionally been the duty of single daughters to look after parents. These duties are imposed on all families. I do not think it is useful to make a distinction between "bourgeois" families and working-class families. A minority of families are rich enough to pay others to carry their burdens, but this minority includes some highly paid workers, as well as the bourgeoisie in the true sense of the word.

The most important changes in the family have come about because there is no longer universal, unquestioning acceptance of the burdens placed on it by capitalist society. Revolt is mainly among women and young people, but, even among these, development is very uneven. This uneven development is at the root of much family tension and conflict. Many parents still expect their children to be grateful and dutiful, and many old people consider they have the right to make unlimited demands on their sons and daughters (especially daughters). "Decline in parental responsibility" is still widely believed to be a major cause of social evils. Humane and liberal-minded people often believe that such amenities as nursery schools, play centres, and opportunities for collective creative activity should be provided for deprived children only, and that most parents can and should meet all their children's needs. They argue that anyone who cannot afford this can get help.

True, there are certain items which can be obtained by persistent demand, if you know where to apply. But can anyone argue that the means test enhances the quality of family life? As for the demand for any service that makes life enjoyable, a common official response is that this is irresponsible, if not immoral or outrageous. For example it has been argued that concessionary fares should not be granted because

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they would be "abused" i.e. someone might go for a bus ride just for the fun of it.

Social Amenities

Reluctance to provide social amenities is not only detrimental to those who would actually use them. It imposes strain and conflict on the whole family. If a mother wants to work, or has to, her burden is greatly increased by anxiety as to what the children are up to, while she is away. Absence of provision for the children is a major factor in making women feel that home is a prison.

Resistance to enlightened social policies is strongly reinforced by the propagation of the idea that the only worth-while real wealth is cash in the individual pocket. This essentially capitalist ideology is accepted by many (possibly the majority of) people, and is backed by continuous advertising pressure to buy more consumer goods. The bogy of rising rates is used to obscure the fact that the majority is enriched, not impoverished, by public spending on such things as parks, swimming pools, playgrounds. Expensive toys are valued (by adults) more highly than collective pleasures. In passing, it is perhaps not irrelevant to mention that the collective amenities are likely to be less damaging to the environment than a proliferation of individually purchased consumer goods.

Society's Neglect

The ideal united family, spending its own money, enjoying its own pleasures, is a fantasy. No family can provide all that children need today. In the richest families the private tutor has been replaced by collective provision in the form of the (so-called) public school. The advance of science and the dissemination of knowledge among young people has shown the possibility of exciting adventures never before available to mankind, and children are asking, almost literally, for the moon. The stance that "father knows best" is no longer tenable, in a situation when he is not able to keep up with his children's homework. The lightening of domestic drudgery, a definite gain in itself, has given women a chance to look outside the home and look for a more varied and satisfying life. It is obvious that the over-worked mother cannot be good company to her husband and family, but the under-occupied woman, who cannot find interesting work has her problems too. Young people are in conflict with parents whom they regard as back numbers, and many are in revolt against the values of the consumer society. The latter attitude is an advance, but can add to family tension in a gadget-filled, whiter-than-white home.

If the children are neglected by society, the old are even more notoriously maltreated. Condemned to poverty from the day they retire, they are regarded as a burden when they become unable to fend for themselves. Families are blamed for rejecting them; but most families who take old people to live with them have to worsen their housing standards to an intolerable degree. But even where space is not a problem, the addition of a grandparent to the "molecular" family sets up increased tensions. The decision as to whose interests are to be sacrificed gives rise to much anxiety, conflict and guilt. Must mother give up work, must the children keep quiet, or give up their bedrooms?

A large increase in accommodation of an acceptable kind for the old is urgently needed. Not only is residential care needed but housing supervised by wardens, day centres, adequate home helps, social clubs. What is commonly called "community care" really amounts to placing the burden back on the family. In terms of cash alone it is completely uneconomic to keep hospitals beds occupied for years by old people not needing or wanting hospital care.

In a Socialist Society

In a socialist society I see no reason to expect any revolutionary change in the family structure. People will still want to live with a sexual partner, and have children whom they love and want to enjoy living with. But when private profit disappears as the motive force of society, then priorities can be placed in a humane order, and the provisions we lack now will be regarded as the basic right of everyone. Thus it will become possible to relieve many of the pressures which, in the name of uniting the family, in fact disrupt it. It would be utopian to suggest that families will "live happily ever after" without conflict. Conflict and the resolution of conflict is necessary for social development.

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